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SOVIET UNION MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No 5, May 1987

[Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents the following is a complete translation of the Russian-language monthly journal VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL published in Moscow.]

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ARTICLE ON 32d ANNIVERSARY OF WARSAW PACT

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 87 (signed to press 22 Apr 87) pp 3-9

[Article by Army Gen A.I. Gribkov, chief of staff of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact States: "On Guard for Peace and Socialism"]

[Text] The workers of the Soviet Union, the men of the USSR Armed Forces and all progressive mankind are preparing to celebrate widely and ceremoniously the 70th anniversary of Great October, an event which has determined the general direction and main trends of world development and marked the beginning of an irreversible process, the replacement of capitalism by a new, communist, socioeconomic formation.

Over recent decades, socialism, which at first became a reality only in one country, has been turned into a world system. The socialist commonwealth acts as its nucleus and leading force. A special and extremely crucial role in it is played by the Warsaw Pact which has consistently defended the cause of peace and disarmament, the principles of peaceful coexistence and has securely protected the socialist victories of the fraternal peoples against the encroachments of imperialist reaction.

* * *

World War II ended with a complete victory for the Soviet Union and the other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. The most aggressive forces of the imperialist reaction--German Naziism and Japanese militarism--had suffered a crushing defeat. Soon after the war, the main military criminals were punished.

Seemingly from henceforward no one could encroach on the peaceful life of the world. People then believed that the forces of war and reaction had been destroyed forever. They linked their hopes and aspirations with those changes which had occurred on the international scene and particularly on the European Continent. As a result of the great liberation mission carried out by the Soviet Army in a number of states of Central and Southeastern Europe, favorable conditions were established for the victory of people's democratic and socialist revolutions. Under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist parties, the workers of these countries overthrew the power of the

exploiters. A world socialist system was formed. Imperialism had suffered tangible losses. The sphere of its domination had been narrowed.

The loss of former positions led to an even greater strengthening of the reactionary and aggressive nature of imperialism. Deprived of its former shock force, Nazi Germany, it remained leaderless for a short time. In December 1945, in his message to Congress, the American President H. Truman openly stated that the United States would assume responsibility for "world leadership."

This unseemly role had been intensely proposed for the United States by its imperialist supporters. It can in no way be considered accidental that W. Churchill made his lamentably famous speech containing appeals to unite the efforts of the English-speaking countries for "opposing communist expansionism" and for a "crusade" against socialism and for beginning the Cold War precisely in the American town of Fulton. Thereby it was proposed that the United States become the instigator and organizer of the struggle against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

Having betrayed its Allied obligations and having forgotten about the victims lost in the joint struggle against Naziism, the United States set out to destroy the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements. The Western powers, in essence, entered a conspiracy with German imperialism on an anti-Soviet platform. Here is what the Chief of the Imperial General Staff of Great Britain Alan Brooke wrote in his diary after the war: "To split up Germany or gradually turn it into an ally,...from now on we must look at Germany from a completely different viewpoint.... For this reason let us preserve Germany, gradually rebuild it and include it in the Western European Alliance." The future Secretary of State of the United States J.F. Dulles in 1947 stated that "there will be no return to the policy of Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam."(1)

The anti-Soviet, antisocialist declarations and statements were accompanied by practical steps to prepare for a total war against the socialist states. At present it is authoritatively known that even in 1945, the United States was hatching plans to launch nuclear strikes against the major Soviet centers.

Not so long ago the world community learned of an American strategic plan under the code name of Operation Solarium and worked out at the start of the 1950s. In accord with this, there was to be the "continuous carrying out of an effective and assertive political strategy in all areas and employing all means: military, economic, diplomatic, secret and propagandistic." The plan was designed to combat the USSR and the People's Democracies. In intensifying the preparations for war against the Soviet Union, Washington planned to "provoke maximum disturbances and resistance in all the countries of the Soviet bloc." Just 6 or 7 years after Yalta and Potsdam, the secret plan provided for the creation of a united Germany by the violent annexation of the GDR by the FRG which was "pro-Western in its orientation and rearmed."(2)

By the time of the plan's appearance, the aggressive NATO bloc of imperialist states had already been established (in 1949). Precisely it was the tool by which the United States and its allies intended to achieve success in their dangerous preparations.

After ratification in May 1955 of the so-called Paris Agreements by a number of the Western countries, the FRG joined NATO with the right of organizing strong armed forces and the ruling circles of this country were carrying out an overtly revanchist and militaristic course. This led to an even deeper split of Europe and to a sharp rise in the threat of the unleashing of a new world war by the imperialists. Danger hung over the socialist victories of the peoples in the fraternal countries.

The need arose for the socialist countries to pool their efforts in the struggle to thwart the aggressive plans of imperialism. In line with this, on 14 May 1955, the heads of governments of the European socialist states in Warsaw signed a multilateral treaty of friendship, collaboration and mutual aid and which has gone down in history under the name of the Warsaw Pact. Its members are now Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, Poland, Romania, the USSR and CSSR.

This was a measure forced on us. The defensive military-political union was a response to that threat which proceeded from the NATO bloc. Thus, in fact, in a specific historical situation, Lenin's ideas about the necessity for unity and a close union of the socialist countries and armies and for the consolidating of their political, economic and military efforts on the question of defending common interests were realized and underwent further creative development.

By the establishing of the Warsaw Pact the peaceful creative labor of the peoples of the socialist countries and the inviolability of the postwar frontiers in Europe were guaranteed and the influence and international authority of each member state were strengthened.

As a result of the joint collective efforts and of the constantly increasing contribution of each of the member states to strengthening socialism, the authority of the Warsaw Pact has grown continuously in international affairs and its positive influence on the overall political climate in the world has strengthened. At the same time, the logic of the class struggle on the world scene, the necessity for a more successful resistance to the aggressive intrigues of imperialism and providing armed defense for the revolutionary victories of their peoples and a sense of responsibility for the fate of socialism have impelled the communist and worker parties in the fraternal countries to be concerned with a further strengthening of the military-political defensive alliance by a closer unity among themselves, by careful coordination of actions and by increased defense might.

A significant point in the history of the fraternal alliance was the April (1985) meeting in Warsaw of the higher party and state leaders of the Warsaw Pact countries where a protocol was signed for extending the pact for 20 years.

Thus, the Pact, as was pointed out at the 27th CPSU Congress, has gained a second life, without which it would be difficult at present to imagine the world political scene.(3)

In carrying out the program concepts of the last congresses of the ruling Marxist-Leninist parties, the allied socialist states are collaborating actively and fruitfully in all areas. Within CEMA there has been cooperation in the economic and scientific-technical spheres and the role of this is constantly growing. This serves to further increase the effectiveness of social production in the allied states, to increase the prosperity of their peoples and to strengthen security.

In carrying out the designated plans, the CEMA member nations have set a truly revolutionary goal: to achieve the highest level of science, technology and production in the most important areas of scientific-technical progress and this will help to at least double the productivity of social labor in these countries by the year 2000 as well as sharply reduce the proportional consumption of energy and raw materials per unit of national income. As a result, the positions of socialism in the peaceful competition against capitalism will be substantially strengthened.

The militant vanguard of the peoples of the fraternalist socialist countries, the unifying, directing and guiding force of their community are the unshakable union of communist and worker parties which by their joint efforts ensure the achieving of the goals proclaimed by the Warsaw Pact. The fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties have shown constant concern for strengthening the sociopolitical, economic and ideological bases of the alliance. Under their leadership in the commonwealth countries the socialist method of production has been improved, the sociopolitical system has been strengthened and developed and citizens have been produced who are ideologically strong and loyal to their political and international duty.

As the volume and scope of the creative activities of the allied states has increased, the range of problems has grown related to solving the key questions of socialist construction. At the same time the confident pace of the commonwealth countries and their increased international authority have evoked fierce hate from our class enemies and their direct resistance. In constantly intensifying the "psychological warfare" and in employing diverse channels and means for this, by all their forces they are endeavoring to weaken the unity of the fraternal peoples and undermine the positions of socialism in the world.

All of this has necessitated a further strengthening of collaboration among the Warsaw Pact states in carrying out the tasks of socialist and communist construction. In this area much has been achieved. The fraternal countries regularly exchange party and governmental delegations. It has become a practice to hold conferences on the questions of international relations, ideological and party organizational work. Cooperation between the state bodies, the social and production collectives has grown stronger and become fruitful. Close cultural ties and contacts have been established between the governments and parliaments, the ministries and agencies, the social organizations and labor collectives.

The activities of the higher political body of the Warsaw Pact, the Political Consultative Committee, are of great importance in further unifying and more closely coordinating the activities of the fraternal states, for strengthening

European security, checking the arms race and mitigating the political climate in the world. The meetings of this committee coordinate foreign policy activities of the fraternal countries, they set and check their policy on the international scene, they coordinate initiatives and specific steps as well as exchange opinions and information. The participation of higher party and state leaders in its work gives a great political weight to the adopted decisions and makes them authoritative in international terms.

All initiatives, without exception, of the fraternal countries are aimed at improving the international situation. These include, primarily, the comprehensive program of freeing the world of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction by the end of the 20th Century as proposed by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee M.S. Gorbachev at the beginning of 1986; the proposal to destroy chemical weapons; the bold and radical plans to have a sharp, balanced reduction in the nuclear potentials of the USSR and United States and then their elimination, as made by the Soviet Union at the Soviet-American meeting in Reykjavik in October of last year.

In June 1986, the Warsaw Pact states from the rostrum of a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee held in Budapest turned to the NATO member states and all European countries with a program to reduce conventional weapons and armed forces in Europe. Here, in the capital of Hungary, other initiatives were also approved: for the pooling of efforts by all nations for the peaceful use of space, for the further development of the concept of establishing an all-encompassing system of international security. The proposal for the simultaneous disbanding of the Warsaw Pact and the NATO bloc was reaffirmed.(4)

Considering the strengthening of security and collaboration in Europe as one of the main tasks in their foreign policy, the fraternal states have been in favor of reducing military potentials on European territory and completely freeing the continent of nuclear and chemical weapons. The GDR and the CSSR as well as Bulgaria and Romania have advanced proposals aimed at establishing zones which are free of such weapons in the Balkans, in the Center, in the North and in other European regions. They have been supported by the remaining allied countries. These initiatives have encountered a broad response throughout the world.

The socialist states are making efforts to ensure the fulfillment of the decisions of the Vienna meeting of representatives from the member states of the Conference on security and collaboration in Europe. One of the important areas for carrying out the program of international security can be the reaching of agreement to eliminate the Soviet and American medium-range missiles in Europe. The Soviet Union, as is known, isolated this problem from the package of questions raised at Reykjavik and has proposed that a separate agreement be concluded on it.

Regardless of the fact that the results of the Stockholm Conference show the possibility of successfully settling questions of disarmament and security in states with different sociopolitical systems, the West as before has remained loyal to an aggressive militaristic policy. The United States and its NATO partners are continuing the accelerated arms race, in hoping in vain to

achieve military superiority over the USSR and the countries united by the Warsaw Pact.

This was confirmed by the meeting in Reykjavik which showed that the main obstacle on the path to radical disarmament is the U.S. desire to carry out at whatever the cost the Strategic Defense Initiative [SDI] which is a concentrated expression of militarism. In other words, the United States is defending its "right" to develop new types of lethal weapons which can become a means of aggression against any state and the "right" to blackmail not only our country but all mankind.

In rejecting the constructive Soviet proposals to strengthen international relations, the U.S. ruling circles are preaching political permissiveness, the cult of force and are wagering on confrontation. By its actions the United States has flagrantly violated the Soviet-American SALT-2 Treaty, having thereby made a beginning to a new, more dangerous step up in the arms race. Libya became the victim of the American doctrine of "new globalism" in being subjected in April of last year to barbarous bombing by American aviation.

The actions of the U.S. Administration have gained support in the capitals of the NATO countries. The ruling circles of Great Britain, the FRG and Italy have shown themselves to be apologists of the notorious SDI. Moreover, the Western European partners of the United States have proposed their own Star Wars Program which supplements the SDI.

The United States and its main NATO allies are taking measures to extend the existence and strengthen the position of this bloc and widen its "zone of responsibility." An example of this is the development of NATO contacts with Japan, Israel and South Africa. It is becoming a practice to have the NATO staffs participate in the support of combat operations outside of Europe. This was the case in March-April 1986, when the NATO bodies headed by the supreme commander-in-chief of the bloc's Joint Armed Forces in Europe participated in supporting the bombing of Libya by U.S. aviation.

The Western European ruling circles are hatching plans to establish a unified "European army" the size of which at first should be 500,000 men. Joint nuclear forces of France and Germany, according to the ideas of the Western strategists, should be its leading military-strategic component. West German militarists are pushing to lead these forces.

West Germany is having a destabilizing effect on the situation in Europe. Here there is a coming together of militarism and revanchism which is dangerous for peace. From here come appeals to revise the European frontiers and alter the postwar settlement of the continent. The might of the largest armed forces in Western Europe is growing. Under these conditions the Warsaw Pact countries have been forced to be constantly concerned with their defense capability. "...We are unanimous that," commented the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, M.S. Gorbachev, "the Warsaw Pact must in the future, as long as the NATO bloc exists, play an important role in defending the positions of socialism in Europe and throughout the world and serve as a dependable tool for preventing nuclear war and for strengthening international

security."(5) The strong combat alliance of the fraternal armies is the basis of the Warsaw Pact defense might.

Due to the joint actions of the communist and worker parties, the readiness of the Joint Armed Forces to repel possible aggression has increased significantly in recent years. The fire and striking power of the ground troops formations and units is presently comprised of various-range missiles, artillery systems with high combat performance, modern tanks as well as other types of weapons and combat equipment. They are capable of carrying out the most diverse tasks.

A dependable defense for the air frontiers of the Warsaw Pact countries is provided by the air defense formations and units armed with modern anti-aircraft systems, all-weather supersonic fighters and electronic equipment.

The air forces can successfully fight for air supremacy, they can attack enemy groupings of missile and ground troops as well as naval facilities and also carry out a whole series of other tasks.

The naval formations are equipped with all necessary means to combat the enemy naval forces at sea and at bases and in every possible way assist the ground troops in conducting operations on the maritime sectors.

The personnel of the Joint Armed Forces is loyal to the cause of socialism and possesses high professional skill. From 85 to 97 percent of the officers are members and candidate members of the communist and worker parties while 60-70 percent of the soldiers and NCOs are members of youth organizations.

Extensive and painstaking work to develop the Joint Armed Forces and to train the personnel of their member troops is carried out by the Warsaw Pact military bodies such as: the Committee of Ministers of Defense, the Joint Command, the Military Council, the Staff and Technical Committee. Thus, a session of the Committee of Defense Ministers held at the end of last year examined the urgent problems of further increasing the defense capability of the allied armies and strengthening the Joint Armed Forces and set out ways to improve their operational and combat training, technical equipping and all types of support.

Military cooperation of the fraternal countries is an important factor in preserving peace as well as developing and improving the Joint Armed Forces and the national armies and for strengthening the joint defense of the Warsaw Pact states.

In recent years this has grown stronger, its forms have become diversified and efforts are being more clearly coordinated on the questions of strengthening defense, the organizational development of the national armies and the raising of their combat readiness. This makes it possible to have optimum employment of the forces of the fraternal countries for strengthening collective defense capability.

Due to the daily concern and constant leadership by the Marxist-Leninist parties, the armed forces of the fraternal countries presently possess, in essence, a uniform, scientifically based system for training the various armed services and branches of troops and this ensures a high level of readiness of the allied armies to repel imperialist aggression.

The military-technical collaboration of the Warsaw Pact states has a multifaceted, planned nature. Due to this the armed forces are provided with modern weapons and equipment. All of this immeasurably increases the combat capabilities of the fraternal armies.

Other forms of military collaboration between the fraternal countries are also developing intensely and fruitfully. Joint exercises of varying scale play a particularly important role in the collective training of the allied armies and the Joint Armed Forces as a whole. These are conducted according to the plans of the Joint and national commands. In the joint exercises they most completely work through the cooperation of the formations, units and subunits, the operational-tactical training of the commanders and staffs and the field, air and sea skills are improved and experience is exchanged in the training and indoctrination of the personnel and staffs. For the men of the allied armies, the exercises of recent years such as Soyuz [Union], Shchit [Shield], Bratstvo po oruzhiyu [Fraternity in Arms] and Druzhba [Friendship] have been a school for combat skill and experience in joint actions.

The fraternal states and parties in every possible way are concerned with the development of military science and the training of military personnel. Collaboration is developing successfully among the political bodies of the Warsaw Pact armies and this helps in more effectively indoctrinating the personnel in high revolutionary vigilance, a burning hate for imperialists and a readiness to immediately and decisively defend the socialist victories of the fraternal peoples. The contacts of the men from the groups of Soviet troops temporarily stationed on the territory of the GDR, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia with the population and armies of these countries are beneficial and diverse.

* * *

For 32 years the Warsaw Pact has guarded the peaceful, creative labor of the peoples of the fraternal countries. The unity of its member states and the combat alliance of their armies are the most dependable barrier on the path of the imperialist forces which are endeavoring to nullify the socialist victories of the workers and unleash a world war. United by common fundamental interests and goals of building socialism and communism and by a Marxist-Leninist ideology, the allied countries are steadily strengthening their solidarity in the struggle for the cause of peace and socialism.

FOOTNOTES

1. KOMMUNIST, No 2, 1985, p 81.
2. Ibid., pp 81-82.
3. See: "Materialy XXVII syezda KPSS" [Materials of the 27th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1986, p 71.
4. PRAVDA, 12 June 1986.
5. Ibid., 24 April 1985.

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WAYS OF INCREASING STABILITY OF OPERATIONAL DEFENSE

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 87 (signed to press 22 Apr 87) pp 16-24

[Article, published under the heading "Soviet Military Art," by Col A.N. Bashenov, candidate of historical sciences: "Ways of Increasing Stability of Operational Defense"]

[Text] During the Great Patriotic War, the operational defensive held a significant place in the combat operations of the Soviet Army. In 1941-1942, this was carried out under the conditions of the strategic defensive by the USSR Armed Forces, by the enemy's air supremacy, the predominance of the enemy forces, with initiative in its hands and advantages in combat experience. The goal of the defensive was to halt the advancing enemy, to cause it the greatest possible losses and establish conditions for going over to a counteroffensive. In 1943-1945, the defensive operations by the fronts and armies most frequently occurred within the context of a strategic offensive by the Soviet Armed Forces. These were usually carried out to save resources in the interests of conducting an offensive on a more important axis, for gaining time to prepare a strike on a chosen sector, for holding attained lines and bridgeheads and for repelling enemy counterstrikes.

The conditions for the Soviet troops to go over to the defensive (forced, hurried or intentional) largely determined the nature of the defensive actions and told on their results. However, in all instances the stability of the operational defense, that is, the ability of the defending troops to oppose the enemy thrust, to repel its offensive and hold the occupied line, to a significant degree depended upon the completeness and promptness of detecting the enemy's plan.

During the first months of the war, the poor knowledge of the enemy and the methods of its operations as well as the insufficient organization of reconnaissance and the contradictoriness of its data impeded the taking of decisions. For example, erroneous intelligence data that the main Nazi grouping by October 1941 was located to the south of Dukhovshchina in the aim of launching a thrust on the Vyazma axis led to the concentrating of the main efforts of the Western Front to the west of Vyazma. In actuality, as subsequent events were to show, the enemy grouping was significantly farther north. As a result, the Nazis were able to rapidly breach the defenses of the

front and push into their operational depth.(1) In 1943-1945, due to the experience gained, the Soviet Command basically was able to detect the enemy's plan and oppose its main forces with sufficiently strong groupings of its own troops. Consequently, the lessons of the last war teach that for establishing a strong defense it is extremely essential to have a good knowledge of the enemy (its intentions, methods of advance, strong and weak points) and effectively utilize this in preparing for the defensive operation and in the course of it.

In holding the occupied lines and in bleeding the enemy assault groupings white, it was difficult to overestimate the role of the skillful massing of men and weapons on the crucial sectors of the front and army defenses. The employment of this principle was not fully observed at the outset of the war. The command personnel lacked proper combat experience, there was an acute shortage of weapons and combat equipment and the necessity of fighting in wide zones, for an army from 70 to 200 km in 1941 up to 70-120 km in 1942. Moreover, a majority of the commanders endeavored to cover all sectors and this led to the virtually uniform distribution of forces along the front, to low operational densities and to a shallow depth of the troop operational configuration. The enemy was able to breach such defenses comparatively rapidly and advance significant distances.

As the operational field forces gained tank, artillery, engineer and other formations and units as well as experience gained in employing them, the Soviet Command began to utilize the principle of massing more decisively. The art of concentrating forces on the probable sectors of the main enemy thrusts was most clearly manifested in the defensive operations of 1943-1945.

In all elements of command they put an end to the even distribution of troops along the front. At the expense of a bold weakening of them on the secondary sectors, efforts could not be concentrated on relatively narrow threatened sectors. In particular, on the Central Front on the defensive at Kursk in a zone of 306 km, the main forces (58 percent of the total number of rifle formations, 87 percent of the tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount] and 70 percent of the artillery) were positioned in an area 95 km wide (31 percent of the entire length of the defensive front), and where the main enemy thrust was expected. In the area of the 13th Army (32 km) which was around 10 percent of the total defensive zone of the front, they concentrated 30 percent of the rifle divisions, up to 50 percent of the artillery and 36 percent of the front's tanks. The massing of troops was very skillfully carried out also in the Balaton Defensive Operation. The commander of the Third Ukrainian Front deployed three combined-arms armies, two tank corps and a mechanized corps on the sector of the expected main enemy thrust (up to 80 km along the front). The formations of just two armies defended the remaining zone (over 200 km long).(2)

The skillful concentration of troops on the crucial sectors ensured the establishing of high operational densities on them. While in the defense of Moscow the average operational density was one division per 6-13 km, 3-6 guns and mortars per kilometer of front and 1 or 2 tanks per kilometer of front, at Kursk this reached 7-7.4 km per division, 35 guns and mortars per kilometer of front and 5-7 tanks and SAU per kilometer. On the sectors of probable enemy

thrusts, the densities were even higher: 2-5 km per rifle division, 50-125 guns and mortars per kilometer of front and 11-17 tanks and SAU per kilometer.(3) Approximately the same picture was observed in the operations of 1944-1945. Such high densities made it possible to check the drive of strong enemy groupings. From 1943, the defenses of the Soviet troops became insurmountable. As a rule, an offensive by the Nazi troops died out in the tactical zone or the near operational depth. The Wehrmacht's offensive strategy suffered a complete collapse and this served as one of the convincing proofs of the triumph of Soviet military art.

Among the most important ways for increasing the stability of the front and army defenses was to increase the depth of the operational configuration of their troops. The experience of the defensive actions showed the falaciousness of the prewar views according to which it was felt that the nature of the defensive gains its fullest expression within an army operation. Even at the outset of the war, it was essential to oppose the large masses of Nazi tanks with a deeply echeloned defense and because of this the need arose of involving the resources of not a single front but rather a group of fronts. Moreover, the scope of the enemy offensive changed abruptly. It developed along a wide front and to a great depth. For this reason only groups of fronts (and more rarely individual fronts) which possessed a significant quantity of aviation, artillery and tanks could repel the thrusts of the advancing enemy groupings.

The troop operational configuration depended upon the situation, the forces and nature of enemy actions. In the summer of 1941, the situation was extremely difficult for the Soviet troops. The commanders of the fronts (armies) did not have sufficient time to organize combat operations. In experiencing an acute shortage of forces, they, in taking a decision, endeavored to establish first of all a stronger first operational echelon. The main efforts of the fronts and armies were concentrated for defending the main (first) zone. Up to 70-80 percent of the total effective strength was usually assigned for this purpose in the armies. From the autumn of 1941, in a number of armies (the 42d and 55th Armies of the Leningrad Front, the 5th and 16th of the Western Front and so forth), second echelons (one or two divisions) appeared and these defended the second and sometimes the third defensive area. Army artillery and antiaircraft artillery groups and artillery antitank reserves began to be organized.(4)

By the end of the first period of the war, the fronts assigned rather strong antitank artillery, tank and other reserves. An air army was an obligatory element. For example, in July 1942, the Stalingrad Front, in addition to the first echelon (four armies) had an air army and in the reserve were a combined-arms army, a cavalry corps and a tank corps, two rifle divisions, two antitank artillery and two tank brigades.(5)

Because of this, by the autumn of 1942, the depth of the troop operational configuration in the defensive operations, in comparison with 1941, had risen as follows: in the armies from 15-20 km to 30-40 km, in the fronts from 30-50 km to 70-90 km. The enemy had to expend significant effort to surmount such defenses. Because of this there was a sharp drop in the average rate of advance for its troops. While in the summer of 1941, this was 20-30 km a day

and in the autumn of 1941, 4-8 km, in 1942, on the Stalingrad sector, it was just 1 km a day.

In the front defensive operations of the second and third periods of the war, in addition to strong reserves, in a number of instances, second echelons were also organized. Sometimes these included not only combined-arms but also tank armies. An inseparable element in the troop operational configuration of the fronts was the mobile obstacle construction detachments [POZ]. Thus, the Voronezh Front by the beginning of the Kursk Battle in the first echelon had four combined-arms armies, in the second a combined-arms army and a tank army and in the reserve, a rifle corps and two tank corps and an antitank artillery reserve (five iptap [antitank artillery regiment]), an artillery reserve (abr [artillery brigade]), POZ (two isabr [combat engineer brigade]) and an air army. The depth of their deployment reached at times 70 km.

The operational configuration of the armies in the defensive operations of 1942-1945 was most often single-echelon, but a two-echelon configuration was not excluded (the 13th Army of the Central Front at Kursk, the 4th Guards Army of the Third Ukrainian Front in the Balaton Defensive Operation and others). The armies also organized combined-arms and tank reserves, artillery groups, antitank artillery reserves, POZ and special reserves (see the diagram).

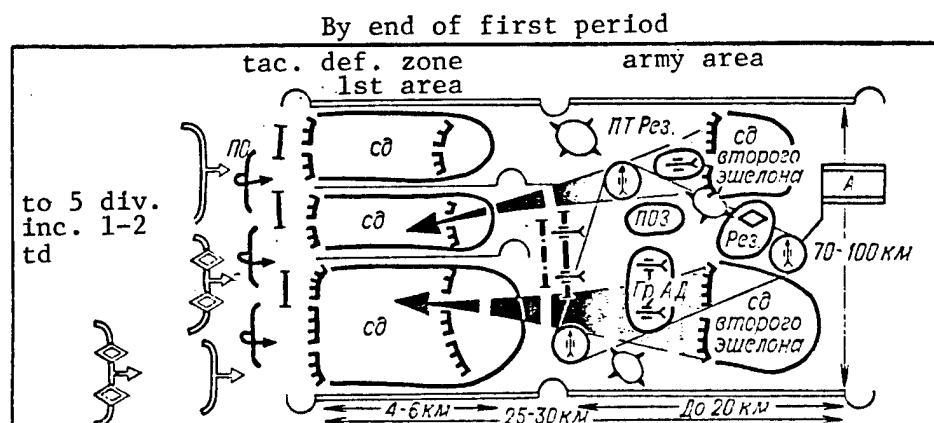
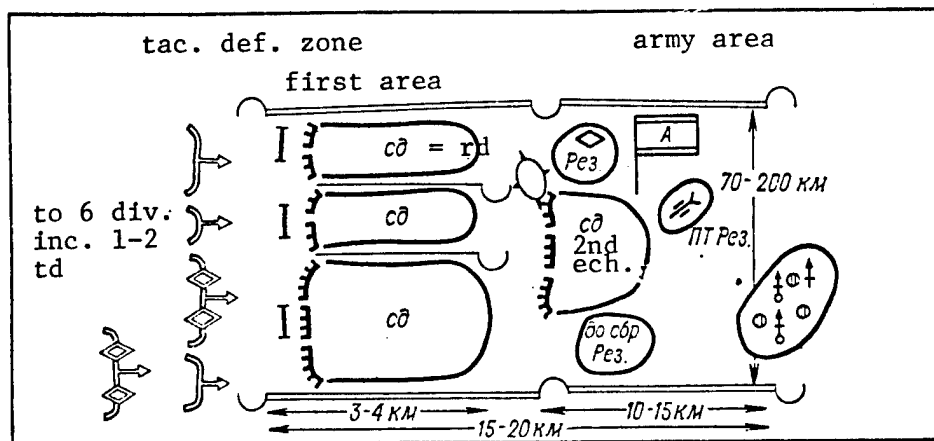
All of this shows that qualitative and quantitative changes occurred in the operational configuration of the fronts and armies. In the defensive operations of 1943-1945, the troops of the fronts had a deep echeloning and occupied ahead of time 4-5 defensive zones (lines). The reinforcing of elements in the operational configuration brought about a significant rise in the depth of operational defenses. As a result the strength of the latter was substantially increased, and conditions were established not only for repelling large enemy forces but also for launching strong counterstrikes against it. The deep troop configuration made it possible to conduct the defensive on subsequent lines and prevent the enemy from breaking through into the operational depth.

The successful defensive of the fronts and the armies to an enormous degree depended upon the engineer organization of the terrain. The nature of the engineer support for the troop positions in turn was determined largely by the methods of enemy actions, by the conditions under which the Soviet troops went over to the defensive, the time spent on organizing this, the available men and weapons and the width of the defensive zones.

The extremely bad situation in the summer of 1941 prevented the proper organization of the terrain. Basic attention was given to preparing the main (first) zone which was 3-4 km deep and this was organized according to a system of company and battalion areas. The focal nature in the configuration of the defenses, the lack of communications trenches between the defensive structures and areas impeded the possibility of maneuvering personnel and weapons within the tactical zone. Subsequently, the stiffening of troop resistance was aided by the organizing of trenches the employment of which on individual sectors began to be practiced at Moscow in the autumn of 1941.

Defensive Configuration of Combined-Arms Armies in Years of Great Patriotic War

In 1941 summer-autumn campaign



Composition of Elements of Operational Configuration

Periods of War	1st Echelon	2d Echelon	Gen Reserve	Tank Reserve	AT Reserve	Long-Range Group (AAG)	AZAG	POZ
Summer-autumn campaign, 1941	3-4 rd	rd	to rbr	to tbr	iptap	---	---	---
End of first	3-5 rd	1-2 rd	to rd	to tbr	1-2	2-4 ap	2-3	1-2
End of second	2-3 RC	to RC	1-2 rd	to 2 tbr	1-2	1-2 abr	1-2	2-3
By end of third	2-3 RC	RC	1-2 rd	TC	2-4	3-4 abr	1-2	3-4
					iptabr		zenad	isb

[Key for preceding table]

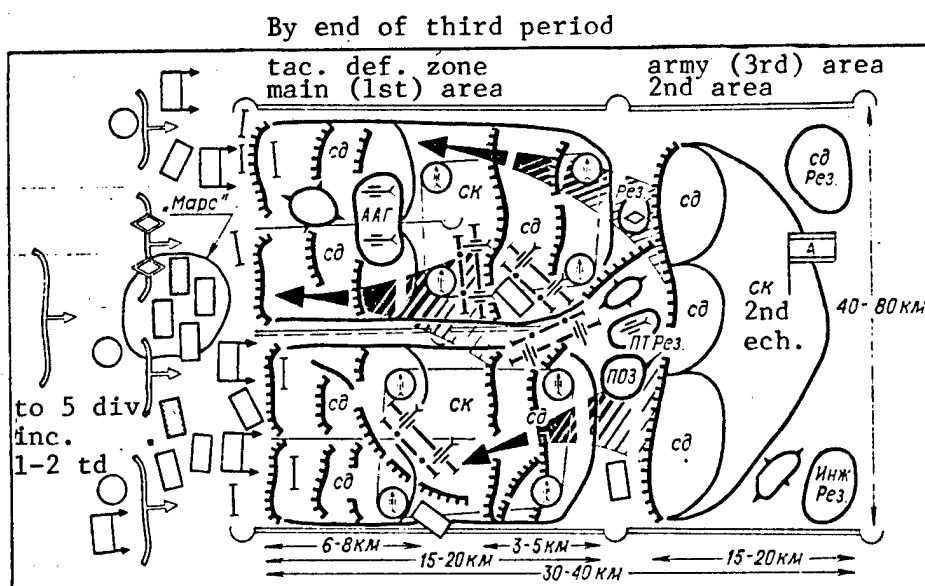
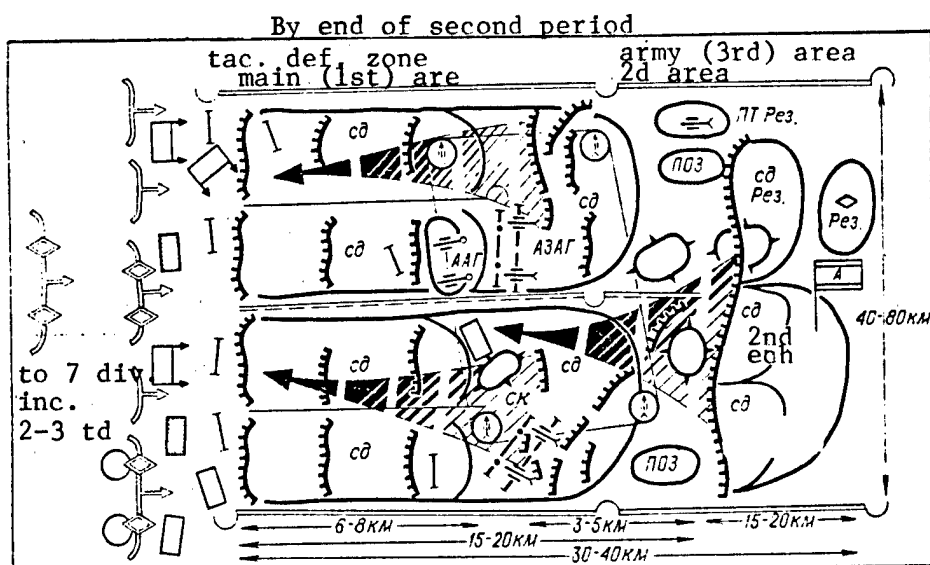
Key: rd--rifle division
 rbr--rifle brigade
 tbr--tank brigade
 iptap--antitank artillery regiment
 ap--artillery regiment
 zenap--antiaircraft artillery regiment
 sapr--combat engineer company
 RC--rifle corps
 TC--tank corps
 iptabr--antitank artillery brigade
 abr--artillery brigade
 zenad--antiaircraft artillery division
 isb--combat engineer battalion

The engineer organization of the terrain gained fullest development in the operations of 1943-1945. This was characterized by an ordered system of defensive zones (lines), switch positions and various obstacles. The defensive zones included a developed network of trenches and communications trenches, open areas and pits for all types of weapons as well as structures for control posts and shelters.

The trenches and communications trenches were the basis of the fortification facilities. By the end of the war they became more rectilinear, they were built with an angle which improved the flanking fire ahead of the forward edge. Many more shelters were built for weapons and combat equipment, including alternate and dummy. This made it possible to move covertly on the battlefield. The survivability of the defenses were increased significantly, as the enemy was forced to fire at covered firing positions and rifle subunits and the destruction of the trenches required a heavy expenditure of ammunition.

Typical was the building of two continuous defensive zones in the tactical defensive area with a depth of 15-20 km. Thus, at Kursk, the main zone prepared by the first echelon divisions to a depth of up to 7 km consisted of three positions. The second zone occupied by the second echelon divisions of the rifle corps included two positions with an overall depth up to 5 km. Behind the tactical zone at a distance of 25-40 km from the forward edge of the main zone was a rear army defensive line and one or two switch positions and in the operational depth of the fronts, two or three front lines.

In the defensive operations of 1944-1945, a particular feature of the fortification work consisted in the fact that under the conditions of a hurried going over to the defensive, the density of engineer structures, the number of zones and their depth was somewhat less than at Kursk. This was basically caused by the limited amount of time and the capabilities of the troops which in going over to the defensive at the final stage of offensive operations were significantly under-strength. Nevertheless, the previous experience was taken into account and the operational defenses were established rather deep. Thus, at Balaton in the Third Ukrainian Front, these reached 60-80 km and included five defensive areas (lines).



- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| □ -- conc. fire of rocket units | □ -- moving barrage |
| □ -- conc. fire | □ -- fixed barrage fire |
| ○ -- long-range fire | ○ -- army AT area |

Average Operational Densities of Forces (per km of front)

Periods of War	Km per Division	Guns & Mortars	Tanks & SAU*	Antitank Guns
Summer-autumn campaign, 1941	15 and more	5-6	1-3	1-3
End of first	10-12	16-27	6-7	3-5
End of second	7-13	30-80	7-27	20-25
End of third	7-8	50-70	7-20	25-30

*SAU were received in 1943.

The establishing of a highly efficient system of man-made obstacles was of important significance for strengthening the defenses. The wide employment of the obstacles was carried out in the aim of reducing the enemy rate of advance, impeding the maneuvering of its troops and causing it losses in personnel and equipment.

During the first period of the Great Patriotic War, the low mining density to a significant degree was compensated for by building a large number of traps, one-way tank ditches, tank steps and other non-explosive obstacles. As the mass production of mines was organized, the role of mixed minefields constantly increased. This became a requisite element in the engineer organization of the terrain. In particular, at Kursk, in the zone of the 6th Guards Army (60 km wide), around 90,000 antitank mines and 64,000 antipersonnel mines were laid. Particular attention was given to the laying of minefields by the POZ. By the beginning of the Kursk Battle, just in the 13th Army, there were five such detachments with 8,400 antitank mines and 4,100 antipersonnel mines.(6) Their employment led to a sharp rise in minefields on the ascertained sector of the enemy main thrust. For example, by the start of the Balaton Defensive Operation, on the breakthrough sector of the enemy grouping in the zone of the XXX Rifle Corps of the 26th Army, some 4,600 antitank mines were laid and by the end of the operation their number exceeded 27,000, that is, it had increased by 6-fold. As a result the average densities of the mixed minefields rose sharply. Thus, in the second period of the war, these comprised 1,500 antitank mines and 1,700 antipersonnel mines per kilometer of front (3-6-fold more than in the defense of Moscow and 2-3-fold more than at Stalingrad)(7), in the operation at Lake Balaton, the designated indicators rose, respectively, to 2,700 and 2,500. Such a mining density sharply restricted the maneuvering of enemy troops, it led to significant losses of enemy tanks (up to 20-30 percent of the total number) directly in the minefields and at the same time increased the effectiveness of other weapons.(8)

Thus, with the improved engineer organization of the terrain, there was a sharp rise in the survival of the personnel and combat equipment, in the strength of the entire operational defense, and its capacity to oppose strong enemy assault groupings. The terrain, in being skillfully organized and reinforced in engineer terms, reduced the degree of damage to the troops and contributed to the organizing of the defensive with fewer forces and to causing great losses to the enemy.

The course and outcome of defensive operations depended largely upon the art of organizing antitank defense (PTO). Without going into detail in this major problem, we will merely emphasize the following. The combating of tanks which were the main strike force of the enemy over the entire war was given primary importance. This was carried out involving the fire of artillery, tanks, SAU, infantry weapons and man-made obstacles. It was based upon the antitank strongpoints and areas. Aviation, particularly ground attack, was widely employed for hitting the enemy tank groupings. The maneuvering of the antitank artillery reserves played an exceptionally major role.

The decisive concentration of antitank weapons which became a practice from the autumn of 1941 on the most likely tank approaches made it possible to increase their density and depth of deployment as well as strengthen the defenses. As a result of extensive maneuvering, quantitative growth and the bold massing of antitank artillery on threatened sectors, by the war's end the artillery density had increased by almost 10-fold in comparison with 1941. This was of crucial importance in repelling large masses of enemy tanks.

As a whole during the war years, an ordered system of antitank defense was worked out. This included company antitank strongpoints united into battalion antitank centers, antitank areas, tank ambushes, antitank artillery reserves, artillery in indirect firing positions, antitank obstacles and barriers. From a type of support, antitank defenses, in essence, became a major component of the defensive. Its organization was the corps of activity for all command elements.

The effectiveness of troop air defense also had a strong impact on the success of the army and front defensive actions. In limiting ourselves to just a general posing of this question, we would point out that in 1941-1942, the enemy succeeded in breaching the defenses of the armies and fronts largely due to a weak air and antiaircraft cover. By the summer of 1943, the situation had fundamentally altered. With the winning of air supremacy by Soviet aviation, with the significant increase in the number of antiaircraft guns and with their improved command on the scale of the army and front antiaircraft artillery groups, the organic air defenses were substantially strengthened. The average densities in the defensive operations of 1943-1945 were five-seven antiaircraft guns per kilometer of front and on the most important sectors by maneuvering these reached nine-ten guns. In combating the air enemy fighter aviation (up to 40 percent) of an air army was employed as well as the fighter air divisions of national air defense, antiaircraft artillery and the weapons of rifle units.

A secure cover for the troops of the fronts and armies told positively upon the survival of the troops and all elements of their operational configuration, it ensured freedom of maneuver, it contributed to the prompt and more effective employment of forces for hitting the enemy and ultimately led to a strengthening of the operational defenses.

Among the most important ways for increasing the strength of the defenses was the ongoing improvement in the combat skill and art of employing the men and weapons. The achieving of an operation's goal was largely determined by its skillful organization and by the maintaining of constant cooperation, by stable and firm troop command and by dependable support of the boundary areas and flanks. The role of fire damage to the enemy increased constantly. The massed employment of aviation, artillery, tanks and other weapons made it possible to cause tangible damage to the enemy. Aviation was the most maneuverable and mobile means in the hands of a front commander. During the first months of the war there was a dispersion of aviation efforts. With an increase in the aircraft fleet and the establishing of air armies, aviation began to be employed more purposefully and effectively. Its role increased constantly in ensuring the insurmountability of the operational defense.

For disrupting the enemy's offensive plan, the Soviet Command frequently carried out artillery counterbombardment. This assumed the greatest scope in the defensive at Kursk. Although the capabilities of the fronts did not make it possible to check the enemy offensive, the latter suffered significant losses. It was forced to move the date of the offensive and carry it out in a less organized manner.

It would be hard to overestimate the role of counterstrikes in strengthening the operational defenses. During the first period of the war, their low effectiveness was largely determined by hurried organization and by a lack of forces. Most often these were launched against the point of the Nazi grouping which had driven in and was poorly supported by artillery fire and air strikes. With the incorporation of tank armies, tank and mechanized corps as part of the fronts as well as with a sharp improvement in the preparing of the counterstrikes, their effectiveness was substantially increased. As a result of counterstrikes, the enemy suffered heavy losses, its initiative was restricted and the position of the defending troops restored. The enemy had to divert forces from the sector of the main thrust, commit reserves prematurely, reduce the rate of advance and at times even abandon the further offensive.

A very effective method of checking the enemy was the maneuvering of men and weapons carried out both along the front and from in depth. This made it possible to successively concentrate forces on the sector of the enemy thrusts and thereby stiffen resistance and deprive the enemy of numerical superiority. The second echelons and reserves were employed for this purpose, troops were removed from unattacked sectors or from those where the enemy strikes had already been driven off. For example, in the course of the defensive at Kursk, from 70 to 100 percent of the formations of the armored and mechanized troops were regrouped, and up to 40 percent of the artillery of the fronts. The covert and rapid concentration of the appropriate forces on the threatened sector helped to repel enemy strikes and to exhaust its offensive capabilities.

The achieving of the aims of the operational defensive was largely influenced by the bold and enterprising actions of the front (army) commanders and by their employment of new methods of using men and weapons. Confirmation of this could be, in particular, the following example. At the end of the first day of the engagement at Kursk, the enemy had succeeded in forcing a portion of the 6th Guards Army to retreat. In this situation the commander of the Voronezh Front, instead of launching a counterstrike, as had been previously planned, ordered the moving up of the 1st Tank Army, the II and V Guards Tank Corps to the second defensive line.⁽⁹⁾ They fought to hold this together with the rifle formations of the 6th Guards Army. The employment of such large tank formations for organizing a strong defensive of the areas in depth was a new and very effective form of their operational employment. As a result the strength of the defenses was sharply increased and this ensured the repelling of large masses of enemy tanks advancing on narrow sectors of the front.

As a whole, the experience of the war showed that increased strength of the operational defensive is inconceivable without the strengthening of its activeness and this consists in launching fire strikes against the enemy, in

maneuvering fire and reserves to threatened sectors, launching counterstrikes, and employing methods of action which are unexpected for the enemy. Due to the successful solving of these problems, the defenses of the Soviet troops became more and more insurmountable for the enemy.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 4, 1975, p 94.
2. "Istoriya voyennogo iskusstva" [History of Military Art], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1984, pp 194, 195.
3. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 7, 1973, p 32.
4. "Istoriya voyennogo iskusstva," p 396.
5. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 5, 1974, p 11.
6. "Inzhenernyye voyska v voyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu" [Engineer Troops in the Battles for the Soviet Motherland], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1970, p 158.
7. "Inzhenernyye voyska Sovetskoy Armii. 1918-1945" [Engineer Troops of the Soviet Army. 1918-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1985, p 348.
8. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 9, 1979, pp 72, 73.
9. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy....," Vol 7, 1976, pp 150-151.

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EMPLOYMENT OF SMOKE AGENTS IN OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 87 (signed to press 22 Apr 87) pp 25-32

[Article by Col (Ret) V.Ye. Yakubov, candidate of historical sciences, docent:
"Employment of Smoke Agents in Offensive Operations of Great Patriotic War"]

[Text] Soviet troops employed obscuring smoke for the first time in August 1941. Its employment at the end of the summer and in the autumn of 1941 had a clearly expressed tactical nature (supporting reconnaissance actions or the offensive of individual subunits). Only in October and November during the period of the fighting for the bridgehead at Nevskaya Dubrovka were smokescreens set for supporting the actions of the 8th and 55th Armies of the Leningrad Front. Moreover, in December 1941, smokescreens were used to cover the crossing of the Neva by units of the 55th Army. They were set in the areas of both these field forces by the 84th Separate Chemical Defense Battalion.

From the summer of the following year, obscuring smoke began to be employed on all fronts. However, as before (up to the counteroffensive at Kursk), this was usually set for tactical purposes. The main task of smoke support during this period was to conceal reconnaissance actions. The scale of employing smoke for recovering reconnaissance actions can be judged from the experience of the Kalinin Front. Here from August 1942 through August 1943, smokescreens were set 161 times for this purpose. With a narrow front (around 500 m) and short in time (around 30 minutes), in a majority of instances these were set on a false sector for diverting the enemy's attention from scout actions. Only on individual sectors of the Soviet-German Front was smoke employed to support an offensive on an army scale. For example, smokescreens were set in September-October 1942 for supporting the simultaneous crossing of the Neva by three rifle divisions and one rifle brigade of the Neva Operations Group. At the end of September 1942, in the aim of covering the right flank of the assault grouping from the 1st Guards Army in the Stalingrad area against enemy fire and observation, a smokescreen was set by the forces of a separate chemical defense company from the 173d Rifle Division. Smoke weapons were employed also in the course of the offensive operation by the 3d Assault Army in December 1942 at Velikiye Luki. The wide employment of smoke was also planned in the course of the counteroffensive at Stalingrad in breaching the

enemy defenses and in committing mobile groups to the engagement but due to bad weather conditions the troops had to abandon smoke support.

The first combat experience in smokescreening rear facilities for air defense purposes was gained in April 1942 in camouflaging the rail bridge over the Ugra River at the Sergiyev Skit siding of the Moscow-Kiev Railroad. Here they employed smoke pots and eight ARS-6 vehicles for setting the smokescreens. In order to conceal the vehicles from the air, smoke pots were set out between them. The "windows" in the smokescreens set by the ARS-6 vehicles were screened using floating sources set up on boats.(1) Due to the use of smoke the Nazis were unable to knock out the bridge while previously Nazi aviation had destroyed it twice.

During the period of the counteroffensive by the Soviet troops at Kursk and the subsequent Soviet Army offensive, the scale of employing smoke agents increased sharply. Starting from the second half of 1943, smoke began to be widely employed for operational purposes. Of great importance for developing its wide employment was the use of the separate chemical defense battalions in carrying out smoke support tasks for the combat operations of the troops and for concealing rear facilities. These battalions were equipped with 5-10 smoke machines, 12 special smoke trailers and 12 sets of a smoke device.

The smoke support for the reconnaissance actions in preparing for an offensive was provided, as a rule, by the chemical defense subunits of the rifle regiments and first echelon formations. For setting obscuring smoke, smoke pots and smoke hand grenades were employed. Thus, for smoke support of a reconnaissance sweep in the sector of the 491st Rifle Regiment of the 159th Rifle Division from the 5th Army of the Western Front during the night of 17 April 1944, a chemical defense platoon and a combat engineer squad organized seven smoke-generating areas (28 DM-11 pots in each). A smokescreen was set on 17 April at 1500 hours on a front of 500 m ahead of the first Soviet troop trench. Under its cover a reconnaissance platoon from the division broke into the enemy positions, destroyed 15 Nazis, captured 4, and then, having thrown RDG-2 smoke hand grenades into the enemy trenches, organized the return to the positions of the 491st Rifle Regiment. Due to the use of smoke agents, the losses of the search group were insignificant: 1 killed and 4 wounded.(2)

In preparing offensive operations, smoke support for operational camouflage was of important significance. One of the first instances of the employment of smoke for this purpose was its use in the zone of the 23d Army of the Leningrad Front in June 1944 on the Karelian Isthmus. In order to divert the enemy from the 21st Army which was preparing to launch the main thrust, under the cover of frontal smokescreens during the period from 9 through 12 June, reconnaissance detachments and groups from the 23d Army repeatedly feigned the start of an offensive, as a result of which the enemy was forced to shift its reserve to the sector of the field force. During the preparations for the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation, for ensuring operational camouflage, smoke was widely employed on the left wing of the First Ukrainian Front in the zone of the 1st Guards Army. From 7 through 14 July 1944, under the cover of smoke the concentration of the front's main grouping was simulated on the left wing and an offensive by the 1st Guards Army was even feigned by the forces of one

rifle corps. Smoke support was carried out under the front's plan and provided positive results. In carrying out a regrouping of its forces, the enemy continued holding reserves opposite the left wing of the First Ukrainian Front.(3) The setting of smoke was carried out by the chemical troop forces and assigned rifle subunits. Here they employed smoke pots, ARS vehicles, smoke-generating trailers, devices and improvised equipment.

The use of smoke in the aim of operational camouflage in the course of preparing for offensive operations became rather widespread in 1945. The employment of smoke agents was planned by the front staff in accord with the overall concept of the front offensive operation.

The scale and form of employing obscuring smoke in the aims of operational camouflage during the operations of 1945 can be judged from the example of its employment on the Second Belorussian and First Ukrainian Fronts in preparing for the Berlin Operation. The basic task of smoke support for the operational camouflage measures on the Second Belorussian Front was smokescreening over a period of 4 days by the forces of the separate chemical defense battalions in the areas of the false concentration of troops on the right wing of the front (to the north of Stettin) with a total area of over 200 square km. During the period of the feint move-up of units and formations to the forming-up places, smokescreens covered the approaches to the Oder. As a result, the enemy was forced to move troops to the area to the north of Stettin both from the rear as well as from the southern areas where the front's main thrust was to be launched.

On the First Ukrainian Front, the use of smoke agents for the same purpose was carried out by the chemical defense subunits, by the rear facilities and troops assigned to feign the concentration of the main forces on the front's left wing. During the period from 12 through 16 April 1945, during daylight hours smokescreening was carried out for the false troop railheads, the false crossing areas on roads running from the rail head to the front line, sections of column tracks and areas of the false concentration of units in the event of the appearance of enemy aviation. As a total, 225 smokescreens in a region with a total area of 4,500 square km were set for feigning the concentration of troops.(4) The use of obscuring smoke for feigning the concentration of troops on the left wing of the front misled the Nazi Command. The enemy continued holding a large troop grouping here.

In breaking through enemy defenses, smoke agents on an operational scale were employed widely for the first time in the counteroffensive at Kursk. These were employed in accord with plans worked out by the army staffs for blinding the objectives being attacked, for diverting Nazi attention and fire from the sector of the main thrust, for supporting the flanks of the advancing units and so forth. All these tasks were carried out chiefly by the chemical defense subunits of the divisions and regiments with the aid of smoke pots and smoke hand grenades. For example, on the very first day of going over to the counteroffensive, in the zone of the 3d Army of the Bryansk Army, seven smoke screens were set on a front of around 10 km in the aim of diverting enemy attention from the sector of the main thrust. Smoke was generated by the chemical defense subunits of the 283d, 269th and 342d Rifle Divisions for a period of 1 hour and 30 minutes. The smokescreens confused the enemy. It

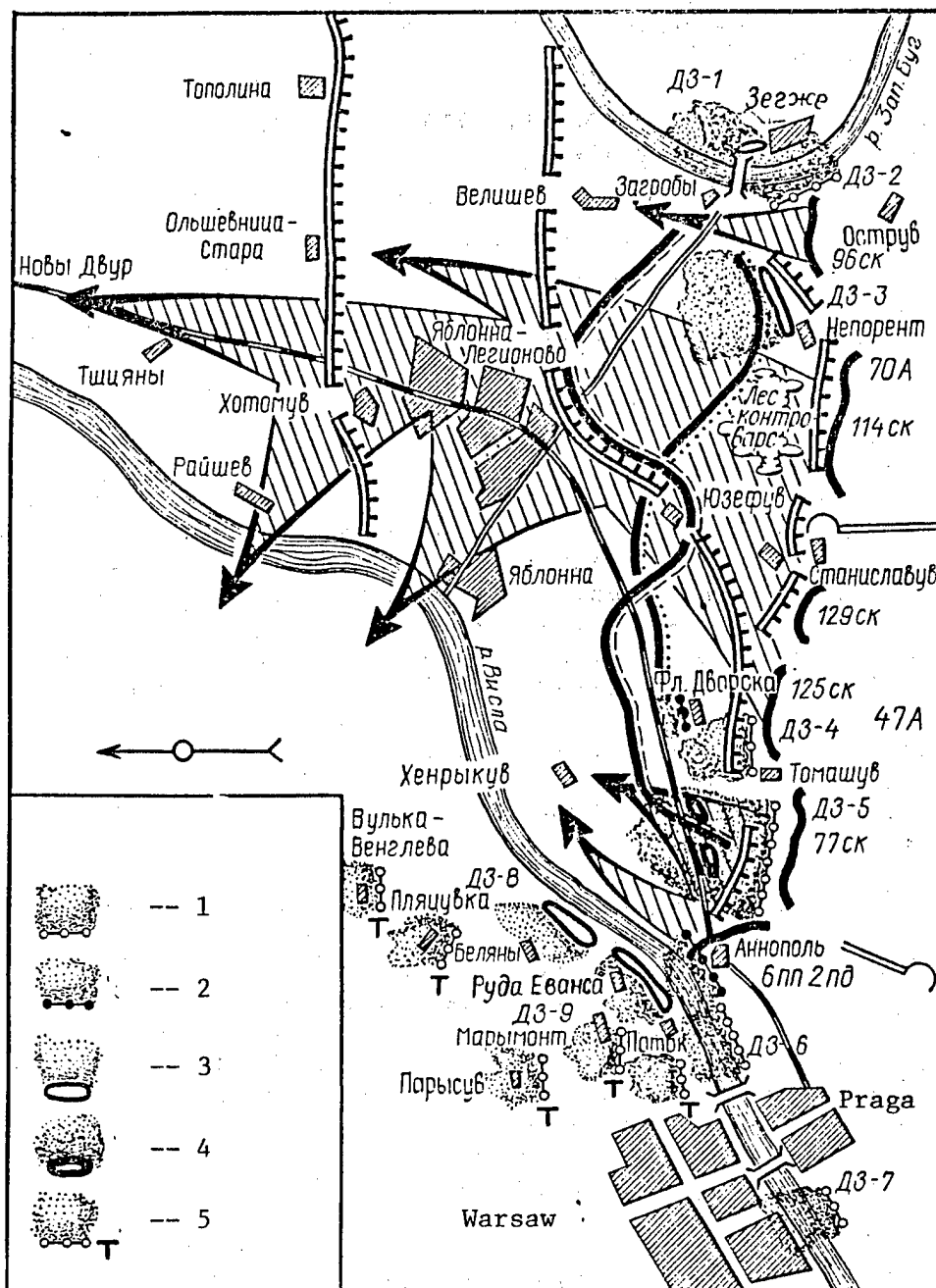
opened intense fire against the smoke-covered areas and even shifted a portion of its forces to this sector.

We should note the experience of employing smoke agents in breaking through enemy defenses in the Kirovograd, Belorussian, Iasi-Kishinev, Vistula-Oder and Berlin Offensive Operations.

In the course of the Kirovograd Offensive Operation conducted by the Second Ukrainian Front in January 1944, for supporting the breakthrough of the defenses, smokescreens were set according to the plan of the front in the zones of advance of the 4th and 5th Guards Armies, the 52d and 53d Armies. Their total front was 40 km. The setting of the smoke was carried out by the rifle and chemical troops, by artillery and aviation. Their actions were coordinated in terms of time and place. Smoke agents were employed particularly effectively in the 5th Guards and 53d Armies. In the zones of these field forces, immediately after the artillery softening-up, the artillery using smoke shells blinded the enemy observation posts, firing points and positions of the enemy artillery and then the rifle troops and chemical defense subunits using smoke pots and grenades set frontal smokescreens ahead of the forward edge. After the infantry and tanks had taken the enemy first trench, IL-2 aircraft set smokescreens deep in the Nazi defenses. This contributed greatly to the successful advance of the Soviet troops. During the first 3 hours units of the 5th Guards Army breached the main defensive zone and advanced 6 km.(5) while the troops of the 53d Army advanced 4 km.(6) For smoke support of the front offensive, they employed 7,720 DM-11 pots, 4,076 RDG-2 grenades, 525 smoke shells and 2,526 kg of S-4 smoke mixture.(7)

For supporting the breaching of the defenses, smoke agents were widely employed on the Second Belorussian Front in conducting the Mogilev Operation. Smoke support for breaching the enemy defenses including camouflaging feint actions of the forward and reconnaissance battalions in the aim of diverting enemy attention from the sector of the main thrust, smokescreening the flanks of the assault grouping and blinding individual strongpoints on the enemy's forward defensive edge. Individual smokescreens were set on an over-all front of about 90 km in width. They were set opposite the main enemy centers of resistance. This significantly increased the effectiveness of the first echelon units attacking the enemy basically in the spaces between the smokescreens.

Obscuring smoke in the aim of misleading the enemy on the true sector of the main thrust, supporting the breakthrough of the defenses and the commitment of the second echelons to battle was widely employed in August 1944 in the Iasi-Kishinev Operation by the Third Ukrainian Front on the sector of the main and auxiliary thrusts. In the zones of advance of the 5th Assault, the 57th, 37th and 46th Armies, the total front of smokescreens was around 60 km. Involved in the task of smoke support were the 14th, 15th and 37th Separate Chemical Defense Battalions, an artillery regiment, a mortar battalion as well as the chemical defense subunits of the rifle divisions and regiments. Smokescreens on the sector of the main thrust were set on the flanks of advance of the front's assault grouping. Here on the fight flank smokescreening was carried out by smoke shells, mines and smoke pots, and on the left solely using pots.



Employment of Smoke in the Course of the Offensive of the 47th and 70th Armies
(10-11 October 1944)

Key: 1--Smokescreen set by pots according to plan
 2--Smokescreen set by pots in course of combat
 3--Smokescreen set by artillery shells according to plan of front staff
 4--Smokescreen set by artillery in course of combat
 5--Smokescreen set by aviation

In the zone of advance of the 57th Army, with the aid of a frontal smokescreen, the committing to battle of the field force's second echelon (the IX and LXIV Rifle Corps and the 96th Tank Brigade) was successfully covered.(8)

The employment of smoke by the Third Ukrainian Front as a whole contributed to the successful breaching of the enemy defenses. The enemy was confused on the sector of the main thrust. The smoke disrupted the observation system and reduced the effectiveness of Nazi artillery and mortar fire. At the same time, there were also shortcomings in the employment of obscuring smoke in this operation. Smokescreens were rarely set deep in the enemy defenses in the course of the fighting. The decision to set smokescreens solely on the flanks of the breakthrough sector of the front's assault grouping cannot be considered correct, as here a corridor more than 15 km wide was left unobscured.

The measures to employ smoke agents by the First Ukrainian Front in breaching the defenses in the Vistula-Oder Operation were aimed at misleading the enemy on the sector of the main thrust from the Sandomierz bridgehead and directly to supporting the flanks of the assault grouping on the breakthrough sector. For this purpose, according to the front's plan for blinding the enemy and depriving it of the possibility of carrying out observation and aimed fire at the attacking troops, on the left wing of the grouping a smokescreen was set with a front of 12 km, and on the right, one 8 km long. The smokescreen on the left flank was set by the 32d Separate Chemical Defense Battalion, a chemical defense company and two rifle platoons over a period of 2 hours and 20 minutes. On the right flank, after the artillery softening-up, a smokescreen was raised by air forces and ground troops. It lasted 3.5 hours. The smokescreening of the enemy here was carried out by three aircraft groups numbering from seven to nine aircraft using the UKhAP-250 equipment and the DAB-100 smoke bombs, as well as by subunits of the chemical and rifle troops employing smoke pots.(9)

Smoke agents on the breakthrough sector were employed according to the plans of the armies, corps and divisions in the aim of blinding the enemy firing points and observation posts as well as covering the actions of the forward battalions.

We should also note the smoke support for the breaching of the enemy troops by the First Ukrainian Front in the Berlin Operation. The smoke support plan for breaching the defenses was worked out considering the preceding measures of operational camouflage. It was planned to support the troop operations not only on the sector of the main thrust but also mislead the enemy on the place of its launching. On the sector of the main thrust, smoke agents were employed for covering the flanks of the army breakthrough sectors in the aim of blinding the enemy with the crossing of the Neisse by the forward battalions, as well as camouflaging the places where bridges were being erected and covering the crossings of the front's main forces on this water barrier. For setting smokescreens each army was assigned a separate chemical defense battalion. The total length of the front of the smokescreens which were basically set by the chemical defense units and subunits equaled 310 km.(10) On the main sector the smokescreens were set solely on a front of

92 km, and on the auxiliary ones their length was 218 km. The duration of smoke generation in breaching the defenses was as follows. After artillery softening up on the main sectors of the armies, smoke was raised for 1 hour 10 minutes, and on the auxiliary ones, from 1 hour 10 minutes to 2 hours 30 minutes. In using smokescreens, the engineer troops were able to erect not only assault bridges but also a portion of the main crossings.

Smoke support for breaching the defenses in the zone of the First Ukrainian Front in the Berlin Operation to a significant degree helped its troops in carrying out the set task. This misled the enemy on the sector of the main thrust, it seriously impeded troop command, it made it easier for our troops to cross the Neisse and had a strong moral effect on the enemy.

Smoke agents for supporting the crossing of water obstacles were widely employed in the 1943 Offensive Operations. Thus, in breaching the defenses with the crossing of the Severskiy Donets River, the 3d Guards Army of the Southwestern Front in September 1943 on the line of Serebryanka, Proletarsk, Slavyanoserbsk raised 25 smokescreens in the combat zone of the entire field force. Their front as a whole was 20 km. The scale of employing smoke agents increased further in the crossing of major water barriers, primarily the Dnieper. For example, for supporting the crossing of this water obstacle in the course of the fighting for Dnepropetrovsk on 24 and 25 October 1943, smoke generation was organized in the combat area of two armies of the Third Ukrainian Front, the 46th and 8th Guards. The width of the entire smokescreen front was 35 km. On the Steppe (from 20 October 1943, the Second Ukrainian) Front, from 12 October, according to the front's plan smoke camouflage was organized on the crossings in the zones of advance of the 5th and 7th Guards and 37th Armies. As a total in smoke generation on the front and army crossings on the Dnieper in the area of this front, 20 chemical defense companies of the rifle divisions and four companies from the 12th and 67th Separate Smoke Battalions were involved.(11)

We should note the experience of employing smoke agents for supporting the crossing of the Dnieper by the 65th Army of the Belorussian Front. The obscuring smoke was employed to divert the enemy's attention from the true crossing area, for covering the troop crossing sector, for blinding the enemy strongpoints on the opposite bank of the river and for securing the flanks of the crossing sector. In order to divert the attention of the Nazis from the troop crossing area, four smokescreens with a total length of 16 km were set on a false sector. Smoke generating lasted around 3.5 hours and was accompanied by the feigning of a crossing. For covering the crossing area of the Dnieper on the sector of Loyev, Radul, six smokescreens were set with a smoke-generating line totaling 9.5 km in length. Depending upon the location of the line, the smoke-generating time varied from 1 to 3 hours.

The covering of the flanks of the crossing sector with smoke and the blinding of the enemy strongpoint on the opposite bank were carried out by setting three smokescreens on a front of 5 km with a smoke-generating period from 30 minutes to 1 hour.

The smoke support task was carried out by chemical defense subunits from the 246th Rifle Division and the XVIII and XXVII Rifle Corps.(12) They consumed 5,500 smoke pots, 2,000 smoke hand grenades, 2 tons of smoke mixture and much improvised equipment.(13)

In the course of the offensive operations, neutral smoke was employed to support the committing of the army and front mobile groups to battle. Smoke was employed for the first time for this purpose in July 1943 in conducting a special offensive operation by the 2d Guards Army of the Southern Front. For breaching the defenses on the Mius River in the Donbass, under a cover of smokescreens, the IV Guards Mechanized Corps was committed to battle. For smokescreening the breakthrough flanks, two flights of IL-2 aircraft using the UKhAP-250 smoke devices set smokescreens of 3 km each. The smoke held for 20 minutes.(14)

In the Crimean Offensive Operation of the Fourth Ukrainian Front, the XIX Tank Corps was committed to the breach for exploiting the success. With the aim of five smoke trailers, in the morning of 11 April 1944, obscuring smokescreens were set on the flanks of the commitment sector. They blinded the enemy and made it possible for the formation to advance successfully deep into the enemy defenses.

In the 1945 offensive operations, obscuring smoke was widely employed in troop operations in the operational depth of the enemy defenses. Suffice it to say that during the period of the development of the Berlin Operation, on the First Ukrainian Front alone, smoke was employed more than 700 times. Smoke agents were used particularly often in the course of the storming of cities, in particular such major ones as Berlin, Poznan, Konigsberg and Budapest. Two periods can be established in their employment. Initially the smoke agents were employed for supporting the breakthrough of the external defensive perimeters as well as in overcoming a conventional positional defense. Smoke support at that time, as a rule, was carried out on a centralized basis. With the direct storming of a major city, smoke agents were basically employed for supporting the actions of the assault groups and detachments. Here one can establish three of the most characteristic tactical procedures for employing smoke. The first of them was that in fighting in a city the assault groups (detachments) most often set small (50-200 m) frontal smokescreens in the aim of blinding the enemy strongpoints and firing positions, as well as for camouflaging assaults and outflanking maneuvers. The second procedure was the setting of smokescreens on the flanks of an assault group (detachment) in the aim of providing camouflage against enemy flanking fire and diverting enemy attention from the assault group. Finally, one must point out such a method as smokescreening the entire area under fire using smoke pots and grenades scattered in the field.(15)

Beginning with 1943, the scale of employing smoke agents increased significantly for camouflaging installations of the front and army rear from enemy aviation. Here particular attention was given to covering crossings over water obstacles. For example, while in 1944, smoke was used to cover 236 objectives (chiefly crossings), just from January through 9 May 1945, this was done around 300 times with 296 covering crossings.(16)

Thus, as was shown by the experience of the Great Patriotic War, smoke agents played an important role in successfully carrying out offensive operations, particularly during the period of breaching the enemy defenses. Their massed employment on a wide front led to the dispersion of enemy fire and, consequently, to its lower effectiveness and made it possible to conceal from the enemy the sector of the main thrust and the maneuvering of Soviet troops as well as camouflage the crossing sectors of water obstacles.

The effective employment of smoke agents depended upon the skillful planning of smoke support in the corps (division) --army--front elements, upon their careful distribution along the smoke-generating lines and the assigning of the necessary forces for setting smokescreens on these lines.

The experience gained in the war years of employing obscuring smoke has not lost its pertinence under present-day conditions.

FOOTNOTES

1. M.V. Krasnilnikov, G.I. Petrov, "Istoriya khimicheskoy sluzhby i voysk khimicheskoy zashchity Sovetskoy Armii" [The History of the Chemical Service and the Chemical Defense Troops of the Soviet Army], Moscow, Izd. Voennoy Akademii Khimzashchity, 1958, p 130.
2. TsAMO [Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 159 sd, inv. 1, file 33, sheet 58; file 222, sheet 42; folio 491 sp, inv. 691712, file 3, sheets 31-47; VOINSKAYA DOBLEST (Newspaper of the 159th Rifle Division, 19 April 1944).
3. M.V. Krasnilnikov, G.I. Petrov, op. cit., pp 193-194.
4. Ibid., pp 218-219.
5. TsAMO, folio 240, inv. 2765, file 31, sheet 35; file 47, sheet 398.
6. Ibid., sheet 34; file 47, sheet 396.
7. Ibid., sheets 33-37, file 47, sheets 389-391, 396, 398.
8. M.V. Krasnilnikov, G.I. Petrov, op. cit., p 192.
9. Ibid., pp 220-221.
10. "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 4, 1959, p 345.
11. TsAMO, folio 240, inv. 2765, file 8, sheets 131-132.
12. "Sbornik boyevykh dokumentov Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Collection of Combat Documents of the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, No 24, 1955, p 38.

13. M.V. Krasnilnikov, G.I. Petrov, op. cit., p 162.
14. TsAMO, folio 1 gv. shad, inv. 1, file 14, sheets 30-40, 117-118.
15. M.V. Krasnilnikov, G.I. Petrov, op. cit., pp 226-227.
16. Ibid., pp 197-228.

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IMPROVING COMMAND SYSTEM OF FRONTAL AVIATION

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 87 (signed to press 22 Apr 87) pp 33-38

[Article by Col Gen Avn B.F. Korolkov: "Improving Command System of Frontal Aviation"]

[Text] Improving the command system of frontal aviation in the course of the Great Patriotic War was carried out in a direction of further developing and improving the work of the command bodies and posts as well as the communications system. The most complicated stage in this process was the 1941 summer-autumn campaign. This was caused by the particular features in the organizational structure of the Air Forces, by their poor equipping with communications equipment, and by insufficient study and elaboration of the questions involved in the command of aviation formations and units in the course of operational and combat training in the prewar period.

At the outset of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet Air Forces consisted of the aviation of the High Command (long-range bomber), the frontal (the air forces of the military districts), the army (the air forces of the combined-arms armies) and the organic (corps squadrons) aviation. Leadership over the frontal aviation was provided by the front commander through his deputy for the air forces and under whom were one or two short-range bomber divisions, three-five fighter divisions and one-two mixed divisions designed to carry out missions in operational and tactical cooperation with the ground troops. Army aviation in all terms was subordinate to the commanders of the combined-arms armies. The combined-arms armies had one or two mixed air divisions consisting of two or three bomber regiments, two fighter regiments and one or two ground attack regiments each.(1)

The experience of the first months of the war showed that the organizational independence of army aviation which comprised 50-55 percent of the number of frontal forces dissipated the efforts of the Air Forces and prevented centralized control of them and their massed employment on a front scale. For this reason, from May 1942, all the air units and formations of the combined-arms armies and fronts began to be organized in operational field forces, that is, air armies which were under the front commanders. By the end of the year, 17 air armies had been organized and these consisted of uniform (bomber, ground attack and fighter) air divisions. In special terms (combat training,

staffing, logistic and airfield-technical support and so forth) the commanders of the air armies were subordinate to the commander of the Soviet Army Air Forces. The new organizational structure made it possible on a centralized basis to control all the aviation forces of a front, to widely maneuver the air formations and employ them as the situation required.

Decentralization of command was permitted only in individual instances (Lwow-Sandomierz, Vistula-Oder, East Prussian and other operations) in terms of those air formations which were temporarily put under operational subordination of the commanders of tank armies (TA) and horse-mechanized groups (KMG) fighting deep in the enemy defenses away from the main forces of the fronts. Here the air army commander, in accord with the decision of the front commander, set for them the general tasks, the number of sorties flown in 24 hours and the combat flight capability. The specific missions for the air formations were set by the commanders of the TA (KMG).

During the third period of the Great Patriotic War, in a number of the strategic and front offensive operations of the Soviet forces, two air armies operated in one front. For example, in the Belorussian Operation the 6th and 16th Air Armies (First Belorussian Front) and in the Konigsberg with the 1st and 3d Air Armies (Third Belorussian Front). In both instances one of the commanders of the air armies was operationally subordinate to the other. Thus, in Belorussia command of the air army operations was carried out by the commander of the 16th Air Army, Gen S.I. Rudenko, and in East Prussia by the commander of the 1st Air Army, Gen T.T. Khryukin. The difference was that the commander of the 1st Air Army possessed somewhat less independence in decision taking, since on the Third Belorussian Front there was a representative of Hq SHC, the Commander of the Soviet Army Air Forces, Chief Mar Avn A.A. Novikov with an operations group. The instructions of the latter on the employment of aviation and the adjustment of missions by him at times went beyond the limits of ordinary coordination of the operations of the two air armies and the other air forces involved in the operation. In this sense the representative of Headquarters to a certain degree had assumed the functions of the commander of the front air forces.

As a whole the above-indicated principle of command in a certain situation proved effective, although it had shortcomings. A commander appointed as the senior air chief and his staff gave chief attention to the questions of organizing the command of their air formations. Since the air army staff was also concerned with planning joint operations and was overloaded with work, in giving tasks to the forces of an operationally subordinate air army, there was a lack of specificity and control over the organization of preparing for the combat sorties and their execution was weakened.

The air forces command gave great attention to improving the work of the air staffs. The Directive of the Air Forces Staff of 18 December 1943 pointed out: "The staff is a command body. For this reason in order to raise the quality of command up to the level of the requirements of the order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, all levels of commanders must be concerned above all with the training of their staffs and learn to control the units and formations with the aid of their staffs.... The main content of training the staffs for the air divisions, corps and air armies is to shape them into

bodies which clearly and continuously carry out the will of the commander in the control of combat operations...."(2)

For meeting these demands a Staff Training Section was organized in the Air Forces Staff. It was entrusted with carrying out the following tasks: training the staffs of the air armies, the air forces of the interior military districts, the air corps and divisions in the command of subordinate formations and units on the ground and in the air; shaping up and training the staffs of newly constituted formations and units; carrying out measures to improve operational-tactical training of command personnel and staff officers of all levels, verifying execution of orders and directives on operational-tactical training; providing practical aid to the staffs on the spot. The section carried out extensive work in organizing and training the staffs of 4 (2d, 5th, 7th and 13th) air armies, 15 air corps and 40 air divisions.

Due to the measures taken, the air staffs quickly learned to assemble and process the data concerning the enemy and our own troops, to prepare sound proposals for the commanders and draw up the plans of the latter, to promptly assign tasks to subordinates and monitor their fulfillment, as well as skillfully organize secure command of the formations and units.

One of the chief conditions for increasing the flexibility, stability and continuity of command over the air formations during the operations of the fronts was to develop a system of control posts. While in the first period of the Great Patriotic War in the air forces of a front (air army) only a command post (KP) and a rear control post (TPU) were organized; in the second period in addition they also established auxiliary control posts (VPU). The first of these was organized in November 1942 in the 8th Air Army (commander, Gen T.T. Khryukin) on the sector of the main thrust of the Stalingrad Front. In accord with the instructions on organizing aviation auxiliary control posts approved by the commander of the Soviet Army Air Forces in May 1943, the VPU began to include an operations group (OG), communications center and forward observation posts (PNP).

The OG included the chief of staff or his deputy, the chief of the operations section or his deputy, two assistant chiefs of the operations section, the signals chief or his assistant for the VPU, the chief of the intelligence section or his deputy for the VPU, the chief of the meteorological bureau or the duty meteorologist.

The communications center was represented by a flight of liaison aircraft, by telephone and telegraph sets, radios including command, target designation at the checkpoint (it was also the alternate in the event of the failure of the command radio), liaison with the mobile group of the front and the personnel servicing these.

One or two PNP were additionally organized in the area when the ground troops were fighting on a wide front or under conditions of rugged terrain which impeded command of aviation over the battlefield from the VPU. The representative of the air staff at each with a radio provided target designation and guidance for the aircraft as well as informed the chief of the VPU operations group about the air situation in his zone of responsibility.

In the the course of the war, there was a tendency to bring the control posts of the front air forces (air army) closer to the front line. While in the offensive operations of the first and second periods of the war, the command posts were located 60-80 km and more from the forward edge, in the third period the distance was 25-40 km. In 1943, the VPU were located 15-25 km from the forward edge, and in 1944-1945, 5-15 km away.(3)

For ensuring dependable command of the air formations operating in the interests of the mobile groups of the fronts in the operational depth, auxiliary mobile control posts (VPPU) were organized. Here usually there were the commanders or chiefs of staff of the air divisions. With the concentrating of large air forces in limited areas (Vistula-Oder, Konigsberg, Berlin and other operations), checkpoints (KPP) were organized. These were set up in direct proximity to the front line and had the mission of excluding instances of attacking our own troops, clarifying the objectives for various aircraft groups or retargeting them to new ones.

Substantial changes also occurred in the organizing of the tactical-element control posts. During the first period of the war, the commanders of the air formations directed their subordinate units from command posts located in the area of the base airfield. For this reason, for example, the fighter division commanders had little knowledge of the air and ground situation in the combat area and could not promptly influence the course and outcome of the air battles. In carrying out the directive of the Air Forces commander, from the second half of 1942, guidance radios (Stalingrad Battle) were set up close to the front line. There were several of these in each fighter division. The commander of the air formation was located at one of these called the main one and at the remainder were trained officers from the flight personnel. The main radios which at that time were also called guidance and air combat control points (PN UVB) were actually the forward command posts (PKP).

The PKP were set up in the areas of the observation posts of the commanders of the combined-arms armies some 1.5-2 km from the front line. Usually there were five or six officers in the operations group at them and these were headed by division commanders. From the PKP the pilots received information on the air situation, the fighters were guided to air targets, supervision was exercised over their operations and measures taken to boost the forces in the air battles. The establishing of the PKP significantly improved command of the fighter units and increased the effectiveness of air battles and the dependable cover for the ground troops. From the summer of 1943, the PKP began to be organized in the ground-attack air formations. These were located together with the control posts of the commanders of those combined-arms (tank) field forces which the ground attack planes were supporting. In the bomber divisions the PKP were organized only in those instances when the bombers were to be involved in supporting the ground troops.

Further events irrefutably confirmed the correctness of the decision to have the joint stationing of the combined-arms and air commanders. For example, in the Berlin Operation the units of the LXXX Rifle Corps of the 5th Assault Army which were advancing on the axis of the main thrust of the First Belorussian Front on 16 April 1945 came under heavy artillery fire in the area of Didersdorf and were forced to hit the dirt. The representative of the 198th

Ground Attack Air Division who was at the corps command post immediately summoned the aircraft groups on alert by radio. As a result of the strikes made by the ground attack planes, the Nazi fire was neutralized. Our troops resumed the offensive and successfully completed the breakthrough of the second position of the enemy first defensive area.(4)

Communications equipment substantially increased the effectiveness of command for the frontal aviation. By the start of the war the Air Forces had the RAT, RA, RAF-KD and RSB-F ground radios and the RSI-4, RSB-bis, RSR-1 aircraft radios. However, the absence of aircraft radios on a majority of the fighters and ground attack planes almost completely excluded the possibility of organizing air radio nets in these branches of aviation. This was also explained by the underestimating of the role of radio communications, as wire communications and messenger communications were considered to be the basis of support for troop command.

During the first days of the war the enemy destroyed a large number of permanent wire communications lines and this told negatively upon the control of combat operations of the air units and formations. During this period the basic method for organizing radio communications was a radio network with a large number of subscribers and this also reduced the efficiency of command. As a result of the measures adopted by the Air Forces command, by the autumn of 1941, as a rule all air field forces had in operation four radio nets: command, cooperation with ground troops, control and guidance of fighter aviation, air observation, warning and communications (VNOS) which subsequently was renamed the front air defense warning radio network. The functioning of the radio networks was gradually improved in the direction of increasing the continuity and stability of control. This was largely aided by the increased deliveries of modernized radios making it possible to have two or three of these at the command posts of the front air forces and one or two at the command posts of the formations.(5) The latter significantly widened the opportunities of the front air forces commanders who now from their command posts by radio could call in the air units to attack enemy troops, retarget the assault groups and assign targets among them; coordinate the operations of fighters patrolling in zones and on alert at airfields.

Subsequently, the signals troops of the air forces began receiving modernized RAF-KV-4 and RSB-3s ground radios with altered wave bands of the transmitters; this made it possible to connect them to Karbid and Bekan printers. The reconnaissance aviation received the advanced RSR-2bis, the bombers received the RSB-3bis with increased depth of modulation and a range of radiotelephone communications of about 120 km, while the fighter and ground attack aviation received the RSI-6 with improved performance.

The search for the most effective methods for employing communications equipment led to the appearance in the frontal aviation of new radio networks including: air reconnaissance; air army staff; the calling in of aviation; command of fighters and ground attack planes over the battlefield; cooperation between ground attack, bomber and fighter aviation and so forth. This made it possible to relieve the existing radio networks, to reduce

reciprocal interference and establish a more flexible, dependable and stable system of command of combat operations of all branches of aviation.

During the war radar began to be more and more widely employed for control of aviation. In particular, the guidance of fighters to air targets was carried out by the Redut radar produced in two versions: mobile (RUS-2) and based (Pegmatit). Initially this was more often individual radars from the air defense system of the most important frontal objectives. However, experience showed that for effective guidance of the fighters the air army should have its own radars. For this reason, from 1943, for the period of the front offensive operations radars began to be assigned to the air armies, and in 1944, these were included in their TOE. They were assigned to the fighter air corps covering the ground troop assault groupings. For example, in 1944, with the aid of radar some 2,102 guidances were carried out and 1,262 Nazi aircraft downed; in 1945, the figures respectively were 1,368 and 841.(6) In the Berlin Operation the radars for the first time were employed on a centralized basis (16th Air Army of the First Belorussian Front). The use of nine radars in a system of three radar centers made it possible to establish a field with a detection range of 100-120 km at medium altitudes and this provided continuous determining of the coordinates of all targets appearing in the field, their type, number and dependable further guidance of our fighters.

Thus, experience showed that the state of the frontal aviation control system was largely determined by the organizational structure of the Air Forces. The shortcomings in the latter at the start of the Great Patriotic War impeded command. As a result of the organizing of air armies, command of the air formations and units on the scale of the fronts became strictly centralized. Auxiliary control posts began to be established for leading combat operations in addition to the main ones (KP and TPU). With the failure of a command post, control over frontal aviation was successfully provided from the VPU at which there were operations groups headed by the commanders of the air armies or their deputies.

The problem of the viability, continuity and efficiency of control over frontal aviation was resolved by establishing a diversified network of interchangeable control posts, by their dispersed location in the field in direct proximity to or combined with the control posts of the ground troops, as well as by the extensive introduction of radio and radar.

Great attention was given to the security of aviation command and this was provided by carrying out the following measures: by the involving of a limited number of persons in working out the operational document; by keeping in strictest secrecy the plans for the combat operations of the air field forces, formations and units; by the extensive employment of secure documents for troop control; by personal contact of the aviation commanders in resolving particularly important questions; by limiting the operating time of the telephone centers and radio communications; by setting up control posts and communications centers outside population points and so forth. During the concluding operations of the Great Patriotic War radio relay lines were organized for communication between command posts.

The operations groups and air representatives in the ground troops played an important role in aviation command. In being at the command posts of the combined-arms commanders, upon the instructions of the air army commanders, they clarified the given tasks and issued them to subordinate formations and units, they supervised the course of combat, they informed the command, staffs and flight personnel of changes in the ground and air situation, and monitored the organization of target designation and mutual identification. However, the combat experience gained showed that the best means of command ensuring high effectiveness in the operations of frontal aviation was direct leadership by the commanders of the air formations over the subordinate units and subunits from control posts located in direct proximity to the front line.

At present, the Soviet Air Forces are armed with diverse aviation systems. But the logic of development in military affairs is such that the more advanced the means of armed combat the more advanced its system of control should be. This is one of the most important conditions for fully realizing the potential combat capability contained in them. The employment by commanders and staffs of all the most valuable from the experience of organizing aviation command in the operations of the Great Patriotic War should help in realizing the requirements of the given concept.

FOOTNOTES

1. I.V. Timokhovich, "Operativnoye iskusstva Sovetskikh VVS v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne" [Operational Art of the Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1976, pp 313, 314.
2. "Sovetskiye Voenno-Vozdushnyye Sily v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Collection of Documents No 3, Moscow, Voenizdat, 1959, p 170.
3. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 1, 1987, p 28.
4. See: "Sovetskiye Voenno-Vozdushnyye Sily v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, p 395.
5. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 9, 1986, p 69.
6. I.V. Timokhovich, op. cit., p 283.

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PARTISAN DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS DURING GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

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[Article by Col N.F. Azyasskiy, candidate of historical sciences: "Partisan Defensive Operations During Great Patriotic War"]

[Text] The armed struggle of the partisan formations during the years of the Great Patriotic War was marked by organization and a high level of combat skill. Considering that the enemy almost always was superior in weapons, the partisans, depending upon the existing situation and the nature of the task to be carried out, had to show exceptional inventiveness in selecting and improving the tactical procedures and methods of combat. In some instances they conducted sabotage on transport and at industrial enterprises and in others they set up ambushes in the aim of taking prisoners, capturing documents, destroying military equipment and enemy personnel. Often under conditions of direct contact with the enemy, the partisans conducted raids and engaged in offensive and defensive battles. On the basis of an analysis and generalization of the combat experience of the Soviet partisans during the war years, the article attempts to show the development paths in defensive tactics of the partisan formations in the enemy rear.

Depending upon the conditions and the nature of armed combat on the front and in the rear of the Nazi troops, the experience gained by the partisans, as well as the most characteristic procedures and methods of combat employed by them, it is possible to establish three stages in the development of the tactics of defensive actions for the partisan formations. The first is related to the rise of the partisan movement and the elaboration of tactical procedures based upon the experience of the initial clashes with the enemy. This lasted around a year from mid-1942, when centralized leadership over the partisan forces was established upon decision of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee. In the second are partisan actions in the enemy rear under the conditions of the relative and temporary stabilization of the Soviet-German Front. The most characteristic feature of this stage was the combating by the partisans of numerous enemy punitive expeditions as well as for holding the permanent base areas, the partisan districts and zones and the forest camps of the local inhabitants. The content of the third stage related with the start of the mass expulsion of the Nazi invaders from occupied Soviet territory is the defensive actions by the

partisans to hold areas or individual lines and installations until the approach of the advancing Soviet Army as well as actions to defend population points against destruction by the retreating enemy.

The Soviet partisans gained the first experience in defensive combat in the course of the heavy engagements against superior enemy forces. Together with men from the regular troops, fighters from the partisan detachments and groups fought unstintingly and courageously. The commanders of the troop units and formations often gave them, particularly in Karelia, tasks of holding certain lines and objectives. Here the tactics of the partisan defensive actions differed little from the tactical procedures of the rifle troops as set out by the troop manuals and regulations. The only difference was in the smaller amount of training and drilling of the partisans in comparison with the men of the regular units and subunits as well as their poorer arming and supply of ammunition, mines, explosives, and other materiel.

Of significant interest is the tactics of conducting defensive combat worked out by the partisans in the fight against punitive troops which were trying at whatever the cost to put an end to the partisan movement and secure the rear of the Nazi troops. According to the data of the West German researcher E. Hesse, the Nazi Command in 1942-1944 conducted 43 major punitive operations against the Soviet partisans.(1) Initially the enemy employed comparatively small forces, usually police or security units and SS subunits for the antipartisan fight, but later was forced to employ units and formations of regular troops from the front for such actions in addition to large contingents of special troops. In the course of the fighting against the punitive troops, the partisans worked out their own tactics of defensive action.

The partisan formations forced to conduct defensive combat were usually confronted with the following tasks: to repel or check the enemy offensive, to bleed its forces white, to gain time for escaping from the attack and in individual instances to hold a certain important installation or area. The defensive system, as a rule, was all-round and shallow and based upon impassable wooded and swampy areas of territory. The battle formation of a partisan formation usually included a first echelon, a fire group, diversionary action (screen) groups and maneuvering groups (for sabotage and attacking the rear of the advancing enemy). One or several reserve groups were positioned on the most threatened sectors close to the first echelon.

For a number of reasons the partisan formations did not have sufficient forces to establish a deep defensive and for this reason the engineer organization of the defensive lines basically consisted of earthen fortifications, individual trenches which were sometimes connected by communications trenches. In organizing the defenses, the commanders of the partisan formations (detachments) endeavored to make more effective use of the local natural obstacles, they built simple obstacles like roadblocks and concealed tank pits and they mined roads, bridges and fords in the base area of the main forces.

In the course of the defensive actions, particularly in the first stage of the struggle, the partisans devoted chief attention to covering the most probable approaches to their bases. With a shortage of forces, in knowing the terrain

well, they widely practiced ambushes and outflanking of the enemy from the rear. An example of this might be the defensive actions of the Ukrainian partisan detachments which in December 1941 were based in the Dnieper floodplains and in the area of Kapulovka, Marinskoye and Firsovka. Here there were seven partisan detachments numbering more than 700 persons. The objective of their sabotage actions was the roads over which enemy columns moved from Krivoy Rog and Kakhovka to Nikopol.

In order to ensure safe transport movements, the Nazi Command decided to clear the partisans out of the floodplains and for this assigned an infantry battalion with reinforcements. The council of partisan detachment commanders headed by F.T. Ryzhikov and A.G. Riznichenko decided to launch an attack from an ambush and thwart the plan for the punitive troops. As a result of the skillfully organized maneuver, the Nazis were lured into a trap where they suddenly came under partisan fire. The enemy, having lost almost one-half of the battalion, including 60 men killed, did not achieve the planned goal. The partisans kept an advantageous base area. Their losses were 19 men killed and several score wounded.(2)

As the partisan forces grew as their weapons and organization improved, along with better supply of ammunition and other types of logistic support, the capabilities of the partisan formations increased not only for conducting combat but also for extended defensive operations. For example, here is how the defensive was organized by Belorussian partisans in the Ushachi-Polotsk area.

By the end of November 1943, in the rear of the Vitebsk and Polotsk Nazi troop groupings the Belorussian partisan formations held significant territory in the areas of Polotsk, Ushachi, Lepel; Chasniki, Orsha, Tolochin; Begoml, Lake Naroch, Sharkovshchizna. As a total in these areas a partisan grouping of more than 36,000 men was operating.(3) The largest of these was a grouping which in December 1943 headed the Polotsk-Lepel Operational Grouping of the Central and Belorussian partisan movement staffs and headed by the chairman of these staffs and secretary of the Lepel Underground Raykom of the Belorussian Communist Party (Bolshevik), V.Ye.Lobanok (15 partisan brigades and 1 regiment; a total of over 17,000 men).(4)

The defenses were organized considering the particular features of the terrain. The forward edge ran predominantly along the banks of rivers, canals and prevailing heights. In assigning defensive areas to the partisan brigades (to groups of detachments), the command of the Polotsk-Lepel Operation Group considered their numerical strength, the presence of impassable swamps and dangerous sectors. On the sectors of the probable advance of enemy troops, as a rule, strongpoints were organized and each of these, depending upon the task to be carried out, had from 50 to 200 and sometimes 250 men. In each brigade (group of detachments) the commander's plan envisaged the assigning of a general reserve consisting approximately of one-third of the number of partisans. For actions between the strongpoints, mobile groups were assigned and these by attacking from ambush were to check the enemy on the probable routes of its approach to the main defensive line. In areas where dirt roads and highways ran, mobile sabotage groups were active. The mining of roads and roadblocks were planned for sectors of the most probable enemy advance.

In defending the partisan areas, unflagging attention was given to organizing reconnaissance. The operating radius of the reconnaissance groups and patrols reached 50-100 km. The task of the reconnaissance subunits was to prevent a surprise enemy attack and to provide constant information to the command on the enemy forces and intentions in the given area.

In the course of conducting the defensive, the partisans endeavored to maneuver widely, to avoid frontal attacks by superior enemy forces, with the first opportunity to disengage from the punitive troops, to break through or filter through the enemy battle formations into its rear and again go over to maneuvering actions. They also widely employed all sorts of ambushes, surprise rapid attacks against the enemy troops with the subsequent enticement of them into new ambushes or fire pockets, they conducted an active defensive using individual detachments (groups) on advantageous lines while the main forces as much as possible avoided combat under unfavorable conditions.

At the same time, small groups were sent into the rear of the advancing enemy for sabotage. In order to distract the attention of the punitive troops from the partisan base area under attack, upon instructions of the partisan movement staffs of their operation groups, the activities of the people's avengers were intensified in other areas.

It was particularly difficult to conduct a defensive under conditions when the partisan units and formations were in the frontline zone. Thus, at the start of October 1943, the 15th Partisan Regiment (commander, A.S. Demidov; commissar, I.P. Nizhnik), together with several individual detachments after an unsuccessful attempt to cross the Sozh and link up with the advancing units of the 50th Army, was forced to return to its former position in the Khachinskiy Forest (Mogilev Oblast). Also arriving there was the Partisan Detachment Thirteen (commander, S.V. Grishin; commissar A.I. Strelkov). In addition to these regiments, in the Khachinskiy Forest there were also two brigades (17th and 48th) and three separate detachments. Here there were around 2,000 men of the partisan forces.⁽⁵⁾ Over a period of 16 days the partisans had to conduct defensive battles. The Nazis sent significant forces to fight them including units of the 31st, 35th and 268th Infantry Divisions and these were reinforced by aviation, tanks and artillery. With small forces the enemy sealed off the forest while the remainder conducted an offensive.

Regardless of the extremely difficult conditions related to a shortage of ammunition and food, the partisan defenses were carefully organized. Each partisan detachment was assigned a defensive area.⁽⁶⁾ An ambush of at least two platoons in strength was sent out to the most dangerous sectors from the main forces of the detachment (battalion) with the task of preventing a surprise attack by the punitive troops and subsequently to pull back to the main defensive line. In order to prevent the advance of the enemy, the roads leading into the forest were mined, and roadblocks were created on all felled areas and forest roads. Foxholes were dug for the personnel on the forward edge.

In constantly maneuvering, the partisans repeatedly pulled out from under strong attacks and in turn launched tangible strikes against the enemy. For example, the personnel of Regiment Thirteen showed great steadfastness and

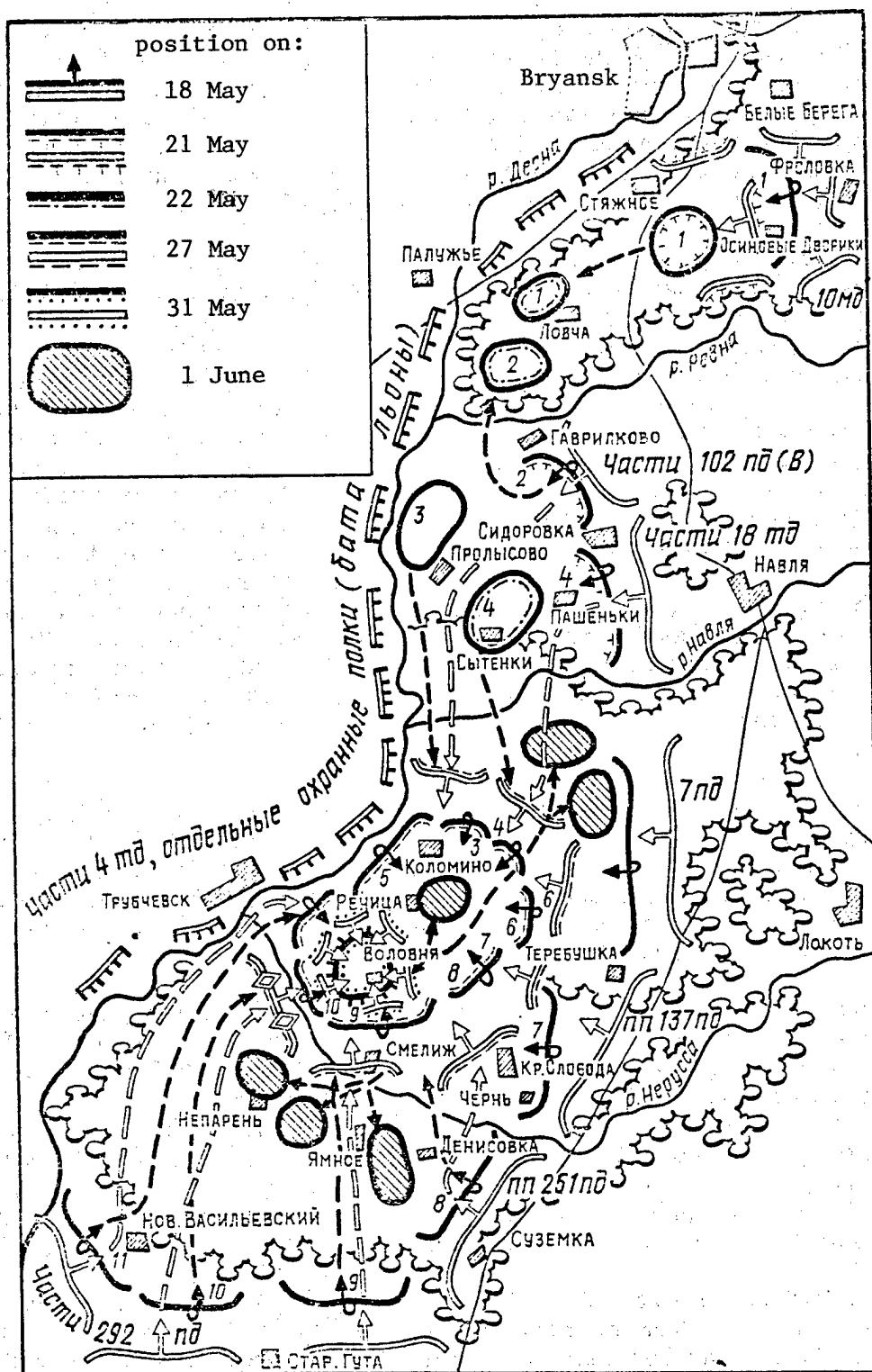
courage. Twice it had to break out of an encirclement and with particular difficulty from the area of the Zhelzinskoye Swamp. According to the plan of the regiment's commander, S.V. Grishin, the escape from this area was carried out by battalion and by individual groups. Such tactics proved effective as it was easier for small groups of partisans to slip out of the ring of the blockading troops and more successfully maneuver in the frontline area and as a result the main forces of the partisan formations survived.

One of the major punitive operations undertaken by the Nazi Command was Operation Gypsy Baron against the partisans located in the Bryansk forests. It was conducted from 18 May through 15 June 1943.(7) The Nazi Command, in planning the operation, envisaged a simultaneous offensive against the partisan area by several assault groups (see the diagram) basically from the northeast (10th Motorized Division) and from the east to the west (units of the 18th Panzer Division, the 7th, 102d and 137th Infantry Divisions) with the aim of splitting the partisan grouping into parts and, in forcing the split detachments up against the Desna, to encircle and destroy them, widely using artillery fire and air strikes for this. Units of the 251st and 292d Infantry Divisions were to advance from the south. In order to prevent the partisans from breaking through to the west, the enemy reinforced the garrisons (4th Panzer Division, separate security divisions and battalions) and reinforced the defensive positions along the right bank of the Desna. The Nazis concentrated around 8 divisions, including 2 panzer and 1 motorized, against a total of 11 brigades of Bryansk partisans (almost 14,000 men).(8) Over-all leadership over the operation was entrusted to the staff of the 2d German Panzer Army.

The Nazi Command employed significant air forces to supply and support the ground grouping. Bombers in groups of 15-20 aircraft periodically made bombing strikes and fired on population points held by the partisans as well as those forested areas where they might be. At times, the number of aircraft involved simultaneously in the raids reached 40. On 28 and 29 May, enemy aviation made over 300 aircraft sorties.(9)

From the reconnaissance subunits the command of the partisan brigades promptly received information about the punitive operation being prepared. All the brigades in the areas occupied by them prepared defenses which included a system of permanent log emplacements, individual trenches, communications trenches, minefields and wire obstacles. The population points of Smelizh, Yamnoye, Krasnaya Sloboda and a number of others were turned into strongpoints while antitank pits were dug on likely tank approaches. All the artillery (up to 40 pieces) was concentrated in the Smelizh area with the task of covering the partisan airfield and hospital located here.

The offensive of the punitive troops against the partisans located to the north of the Navlya River started on 18 May 1943. Detachments from the brigade imeni D.Ye. Kravtsov were the first in the area of Osinovy Dvoriki to enter battle against the advancing subunits of the 10th Motorized Division.(10) In avoiding frontal strikes by the superior enemy forces, the partisans from ambushes launched surprise attacks against the advancing troops, in wearing them down. In order not to be encircled, the brigade was forced to retreat to the Styazhnoye area.



Defensive Actions of Bryansk Partisans in May-June 1943

At the same time fierce fighting broke out in the base areas of the partisan brigades imeni A.M. Shchors, imeni K.Ye. Voroshilov No 1 and Smert Nemetskim Okkupantam [Death to the German Occupiers] between the Revna and Navlya Rivers. Over a period of 4 days, from 18 through 21 May, the brigade Smert Nemetskim Okkupantam repelled the attack of the punitive troops. By the end of 21 May, the enemy had succeeded in surrounding it in the Pshenki area. However, the brigade by a rapid attack broke out of the ring of encirclement and on 22 May reached the Sytenki area. On the following 4 days it was forced to conduct stubborn fighting against the enemy units pursuing it, maneuvering in the forests to the north of the Navlya River. During the night of 26 May, it and the Brigade imeni K.Ye. Voroshilov No 1 succeeded in fighting its way to the south and reaching the Kolomino area. Here together with other brigades from the Southern Operations Group it continued to repel the assaults of the punitive troops.

The fiercest fighting broke out on the southern sector of the Bryansk partisan area, where the main partisan forces were located. There the offensive of the punitive troops began on 20 May 1943. The fighting in the area of Suzemka, Denisovka, Chern and Krasnaya Sloboda was particularly fierce, as the enemy was endeavoring first of all to capture the population point of Smelizh and seize the nearby airfield. This would have deprived the partisans of the possibility of receiving aid in ammunition and food by air from the Soviet rear. Defending on the Smelizh sector were the brigades Za Vlast Sovetov [For Soviet Power], imeni V.M. Molotov and M.V. Frunze. Until 27 May they succeeded in repelling all enemy assaults, although the offensive by the enemy infantry and tanks was constantly supported by artillery fire and air strikes.

Regardless of the stubborn resistance by the partisans, on 27 May the Nazis succeeded in occupying the northern part of the Bryansk Forests between the Revna and Navlya Rivers and in the southern part capture the Smelizh Airfield and come to within a distance of 20-30 km from the Desna River.(11) A critical situation had arisen. Worn down by the many days of fighting, the eight partisan brigades in the Volovnya area on a territory of around 150 square km under conditions of complete encirclement drove off fierce enemy assaults. The ammunition was nearly gone. The partisans were experiencing great difficulties with food. In the developing difficult situation, everything depended upon the ability and skill of the partisan command.

Due to the decisive actions of the operations group headed by the deputy chief of staff of the Partisan Movement on the Central Front, Lt Col A.P. Gorshkov, the efforts of all the brigades were united into one. A breakthrough group was organized from the most battleworthy partisans armed basically with automatic weapons (70 light machine guns and over 250 submachine guns). During the night before the breakout, the main forces of the brigades were removed from the defensive positions and concentrated on the breakthrough sector. Only small subunits remained on the forward edge with the task of exchanging fire with the enemy in order to prevent it from detecting the pullback of the brigades. By the moment of the breakout, the rear guard subunits were to link up with the main forces.

Concentrated on a narrow breakthrough sector of 200-300 m (1 km to the east of Volovnya), the partisans at dawn of 1 June decisively attacked the enemy on

the Terebushka axis and, having breached the enemy defenses here, poured into the formed breach. At the beginning of June, in passing through the enemy rears, the partisan brigades in their majority had reached new combat areas (see the position on 1 June). The Nazis again had not succeeded in destroying the partisans, regardless of the involvement of large troop forces. In the punitive operation Gypsy Baron, the enemy had lost around 9,000 soldiers and officers. The partisans also suffered significant losses (around 3,500 men).(12)

In the subsequent operations against the punitive troops, the staffs of the partisan movement and their operations groups often succeeded in helping the partisan formations with air forces which by bombing and ground attacks against enemy troops made it easier for the detachments to disengage from the enemy and escape from attack. Moreover, in the course of the fighting, airplanes dropped ammunition, food and medicines to the partisans. In order to help the partisan detachments which were surrounded, the staffs (operations groups) of the partisan movement, in carefully following the development of events and knowing the general situation well, widely employed the forces of the detachments and brigades which were outside the encirclement. They were given the tasks of intensifying combat and sabotage activities and particularly strengthening the attacks against advancing enemy troops, its garrisons and internal lines of communications over which the punitive troops were supplied.

With the going over of the Soviet Army to the offensive, the partisan formations more and more frequently had to conduct defensive battles in the interests of the advancing troops. Upon instructions of the Soviet Command, the partisans seized crossings or sections of rivers suitable for crossing as well as passes, road junctions and population points and held them until the approach of the Soviet Army units. For example, the Ukrainian partisans provided great help to the 13th and 60th Armies in crossing the Dnieper and Pripjat, as they captured two crossing areas on the Dnieper in the area of the village of Novozy and three sectors on the right bank of the Pripjat in the Chernobyl area. The most successful were the actions of the formations of I.A. Khitrichenko and V.S. Ushakov in capturing crossing on the Pripjat in the area of the village of Novoshepelichi and the Yanov Railroad Station.

On 25-26 September 1943, the partisans took the rayon center of Novoshepelichi and the adjacent villages. In using the rugged terrain, they organized the defensive around the captured crossings. Units of the 8th Rifle Division from the 13th Army which reached the Pripjat on 26 September crossed the river without a pause. On 29 September, the Nazis, having moved up their tanks, initiated several attempts to capture the crossings. Having skillfully organized the fire plan and maneuvering to the threatened sectors, the partisans together with the Soviet soldiers repelled all enemy assaults. Their bold and decisive actions contributed to the rapid crossing of the Pripjat by the 13th Army.(13)

In the course of the Belorussian Operation, the partisans also showed steadfastness and courage in the defensive battles. Thus, the detachments of the Begoml Zheleznyak Partisan Brigade (commander, I.F. Titkov; commissar, F.I. Dernushkov) successfully carried out the assignment of the command of the

III Guards Mechanized Corps of capturing and holding the crossings over the Berezina as well as a bridgehead some 17 km long on the west bank of the river in the area of the population points of Brod, Sinichino, Kalnik. On 25-28 June 1944, the brigade's detachments carried out difficult defensive battles, holding the occupied positions. The retreating Nazi troops repeatedly tried to cross the Berezina on this sector, however each time the partisans stopped them with fire. In the morning of 28 June, by combined strikes of units from the 35th Guards Tank Brigade of Gen A.A. Aslanov and the partisan detachments, the enemy troops in the area of the crossings were routed. Partisans and inhabitants helped the tank troops to quickly put up two bridges over which the brigade crossed the Berezina(14) and continued the offensive toward Minsk.

Thus, in the years of the Great Patriotic War partisan detachments often had to conduct defensive battles. Most often this occurred when the enemy undertook punitive expeditions against the partisans as well as in repelling counterattacks after the partisans had captured individual enemy objectives and in holding them.

The tactics employed by the partisans in defensive combat was largely similar to the tactics of the regular troops. However, as a consequence of the fact that the partisans fought on territory controlled by the enemy and the partisan formations themselves were, as a rule, more poorly trained, armed and supplied than the enemy troops, the tactical procedures employed by the people's avengers on the defensive were significantly changed. This was expressed primarily in the fact that in conducting defensive actions the commanders of the partisan formations, because of the lack of forces, had to show more initiative, activeness and inventiveness in choosing the methods of fighting. The defensive battles were usually of a maneuverable and brief nature as stemmed from the nature of partisan actions. But at times, particularly in defending the partisan areas and base areas, the partisans were forced to also conduct a positional defensive. In these instances they prepared the defensive positions ahead of time and carried out simple engineer work.

In the course of the defensive battles the enemy tanks and armored vehicles represented the greatest danger. To combat them the partisans employed antitank rifles, grenades, bottles with burning fluid [Molotov cocktails] and sometimes, if available, artillery. Minefields and other obstacles were set, as a rule, on likely tank approaches. The maneuvering of men and weapons was widely employed. In knowing the terrain well, the partisans usually filtered through the enemy battle formations and attacked from the rear. Such actions were very effective and frequently led to the failure of enemy operations to defeat the partisan forces.

The combat experience of Soviet partisans had a great impact upon partisan actions in the countries of Central and Southeastern Europe.

FOOTNOTES

1. E. Hesse, "Der sowjetrussische Partisanenkrieg 1941 bis 1944," Gottingen, 1969, pp 280-282.
2. "Ukrainskaya SSR v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne Sovetskogo Soyuz 1941-1945 gg." [The Ukrainian SSR in the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945], Kiev, Politizdat Ukrainy, Vol 1, 1975, p 334; "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol IV, 1959, pp 546-547.
3. TsPA IML [Central Party Archives of the Marxism-Leninism Institute], folio 69, inv. 1, file 42/3, sheet 100.
4. "Partizanskiye formirovaniye Belorussii v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny (iyun 1941--iyul 1944)" [Partisan Formations of Belorussia in the Years of the Great Patriotic War (June 1941-July 1944)], Minsk, Belarus, 1983, p 223.
5. TsPA IML, folio 69, inv. 1, file 41/2, sheet 233.
6. Ibid., sheets 233 verso-235.
7. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 2, 1980, p 32.
8. Partiyyny arkhiv Bryanskogo obkom KPSS [Party Archives of the Bryansk CPSU Obkom], folio 1650, inv. 2, file 1, sheets 313-315; TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 6598, inv. 12454, file 3146 (map).
9. Ibid., file 12, sheets 273-274.
10. In the diagram the figure 1 shows the position (disposition) of the brigade imeni K.Ye. Kravtsov, the figure 2 shows the brigade imeni N.A. Shchors, figure 3 shows the brigade imeni K.Ye. Voroshilov No 1, figure 4 designates the brigade Smert Nementskim Okkupantam, figure 5 gives the brigade imeni I.V. Stalin, figure 6 the brigade Za Rodinu [For the Motherland], the figure 7 designates the brigade imeni V.M. Molotov, the figure 8 the brigade Za Vlast Sovetov, the figure 9 shows the brigade imeni M.V. Frunze, figure 10 the brigade imeni K.Ye. Voroshilov No 2 and the figure 11 the brigade imeni V.I. Chapayev.
11. TsAMO, folio 6598, inv. 12454, file 3146 (map).
12. "Shli na bitvu partizany" [Partisans Go Into Battle], Bryansk, Priokskoye Kn. Izd-vo, 1972, pp 106-107.
13. "Ukrainskaya SSR v Velikoy....," Vol 2, pp 326-327; TsAMO, folio 201, inv. 398, file 21, sheet 207.

14. "Vsenarodnaya borba v Belorussii protiv nementsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [The Struggle of All the People in Belorussia Against the Nazi Invaders During the Years of the Great Patriotic War], Minsk, Belarus, Vol 3, 1985, p 311.

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EXPERIENCE OF COMMANDERS OF 1142D, 176TH RIFLE REGIMENTS IN ORGANIZING COOPERATION

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 87 (signed to press 22 Apr 87) pp 48-51

[Article by Lt Col Yu.N. Ugolnikov: "The Experience of the Commanders of the 1142d and 176th Rifle Regiments in Organizing Cooperation"]

[Text] During the years of the Great Patriotic War active searches were carried out for a solution to the questions of coordinating the actions of a regiment's subunits and its reinforcements to the entire depth of the battle task on the offensive.

During the first months of the war, due to the lack of combat experience, cooperation was organized using a map, often without considering the terrain conditions and their influence on the employment of the branches of troops. The basic form of coordinating efforts was to have the commander issue instructions on the organizing of cooperation. Such practices had a number of negative aspects. The commander was not able to be certain that the tasks were correctly understood by subordinates and the latter did not have skills in organizing combat. The actions of artillery and mortars were particularly poorly coordinated with infantry and tank operations. As a result the rifle battalions advanced without proper fire support and suffered losses. Thus, in August 1941, the fighting on the Yelnya sector showed that one of the main shortcomings in organizing and conducting the offensive was the lack of cooperation between the artillery supporting the infantry, the close support artillery and the infantry.(1)

In January 1942, Headquarters Supreme High Command [Hq SHC] required that all levels of commanders personally in the field organize cooperation in the course of which they were to clarify for the subunits the axes and objectives of the attack, the targets to be neutralized and destroyed, they set signals and checked the correctness of their assimilation by subordinates. The directive prohibited the starting of an offensive without checking the organization of cooperation in the subordinate units and subunits.(2)

The Red Army Infantry Combat Manual published at the end of 1942 played an important role in further improving the questions of cooperation in combat. This stated that the cooperation of a regiment with attached and supporting

forces consists in having the artillery, mortars and combat engineers support the tanks and infantry in their charge, the capturing of strongpoints on the first line of defenses as well as during the offensive in depth.

Cooperation, it went on to emphasize, is organized by all levels of commanders in the field with the participation of their staffs, the chiefs of the branches of troops and services. They should clearly determine the following: who is to cooperate with whom, when and for what. The commanders and staffs in planning their work should leave the battalion commanders 2 or 3 hours of daylight for work in the field and for a detailed organization of cooperation with the commanders of the attached and supporting artillery, tank, mortar and engineer units and chemical defense subunits.(3) The manual went on to state that, in carrying out the instructions of the combined-arms commanders, the artillery, tank and engineer commanders should know the tasks, the axes and objectives of the actions of the units with whom they are cooperating, as well as their command and observation posts. They should coordinate their actions in the field in terms of target, place and time; they should establish communications, the methods of target designation and ascertain the established signals; they should have a general orientation diagram and a standard numbering of the targets. The commanders and staffs of all levels were obliged to personally inspect in the field the readiness of the troops for the offensive.(4) These demands of the manual played a positive role subsequently in organizing the breaching of enemy defenses.

From the example of the 1142d and 176th Rifle Regiments, let us examine the work of the commander and staff in organizing cooperation in offensive combat.

At the start of the summer of 1942, the Nazi troops, having captured Kastornoye Station, were continuing the offensive to the northeast. Having been moved up from the reserve, the 340th Rifle Division from the 5th Tank Army was given the task of relieving the units checking the enemy advance in the area of Lomovo village, with the simultaneous combat to capture the hills to the north and northeast of the village of Lebyazhye. During the night of 23 June, its 1142d Rifle Regiment (commander, Lt Col V.P. Kiselev) with two battalions was covertly concentrated in Lomovo ready to attack the enemy in the morning of the next day. The regiment was reinforced by the 1st and 3d Artillery Battalions of 122-mm howitzers from the 909th Artillery Regiment and three mortar batteries from the 359th Rifle Division.(5)

During the same night the regiment's commander drove out with the battalion commanders and the commander of the artillery close support group for reconnaissance and with the commander of the rifle brigade defending to the south of Lomovo coordinated the question on permitting the regiment through the brigade's battle formations. In the morning of 23 June, all the commanders of the rifle companies, platoons and artillery subunits were summoned to the brigade's forward defensive edge; they were given tasks for the forthcoming combat operations directly in the field. Cooperation was organized between the rifle battalions and attached artillery for target, place and time for the entire period of combat. Then the regiment's commander gave the battalion commanders 3 hours of daylight to observe the enemy, to study the field and select the best approaches to the enemy defenses.

By 2300 hours on 23 June, the battalions had covertly taken up the forming-up place for the offensive, they had dug in and had been carefully camouflaged.

In order to mislead the enemy on the defensive as to the start of the attack, the artillery was given the task of making two brief intense shellings against the enemy strongpoints at dawn and 40 minutes after the second shelling (at 0850 hours) launch another 10-minute shelling against the forward edge of the enemy defenses, after which the infantry was to go over to the attack. Such artillery softening up conformed more to the firing conditions established on the given sector of the front and for this reason best ensured the surprise of the assault.

At 0900 hours, after the artillery shelling and the shifting of artillery fire deep into the enemy defenses, the battalions went over to the attack. In fighting in a coordinated manner, they easily took the forward edge of the defenses and, without delaying, began to advance in depth. The task was carried out with minimum losses. The enemy lost 40 percent of its personnel, a mortar battery and six artillery guns.(6)

We should note the experience of the commander of the 176th Rifle Regiment (commander, Lt Col N.V. Yershov) from the 46th Rifle Division in organizing cooperation in the field in advancing from the Narew bridgehead in January 1945.(7)

Fighting in the regiment's zone of advance was a divisional forward battalion and for this reason it was essential not only to coordinate the actions within the regiment but also link them to the actions of this battalion. For this reason, in organizing cooperation in the field the regiment's commander informed the subunit commanders of the task of the forward battalion and the procedure of its actions, having made provision for different variations of combat. In particular, he pointed out that after a 10-minute artillery shelling against the enemy's forward edge, the forward battalion should go over to the attack, take the first trench and without stopping, continue the offensive on the designated axis. With the start of its attack the artillery was to shift its fire from the first trench to the second; in the event of the success of the forward battalion, the artillery would shift to supporting the infantry and tank assault by the method of a rolling barrage to a depth of 2 km. If the enemy stopped the forward battalion, artillery softening up would be carried out according to the complete schedule.

For the period of the combat of the forward battalion, the commanders of the 1st and 2d Rifle Battalions were given the task of following its results and be ready to go over to the attack. The battalions' attack was to start according to the agreed-upon signal (a red rocket). The battalions, having gone around the forward battalion, were to continue the offensive deep in the enemy defenses.

The battalions were to take up the forming-up place for the offensive during the night before the attack. During this time 14 guns assigned for direct laying were moved up to firing positions. Each of them was given a task and targets were set which had to be destroyed during the period of the artillery softening up for the attack. In addition, a mortar group (48 mortars) was

established and this carried out tasks of destroying and neutralizing the enemy in the interests of the regiment.

In supporting the actions of the regiment, the combat engineers during the night prior to the attack made passages through our own obstacles and during the period of the artillery softening up for the attack, in the enemy obstacles. Eight passageways were made as a total. In addition to the combat engineers, each clearing group included representatives from the rifle companies to clarify the lines of the passages and secure them. Prior to the attack the passages were designated by markers. During the attack there was a combat engineer in each of them. He passed through the rifle platoons and after this the passages were marked by stakes and partially enclosed with wire.

In coordinating the actions of the regiment's subunits with the artillery, Lt Col N.V. Yershov informed the subordinate commanders that the artillery softening up for the attack had been planned for a period of 1 hour and 25 minutes. In carrying this out, the attached and supporting artillery would neutralize the enemy personnel and weapons on the forward edge and in the near depth. The guns set for direct laying would destroy firing points and pillboxes on the forward edge while the mortar group would neutralize personnel in the first and second trenches.

Then the regiment's commander set the procedure of the subunits' actions in combat.

The 1st Rifle Battalion, in drawing on the success of the forward battalion and in concentrating its main efforts on the axis of Glodovo, Gostseyevo, in cooperation with the 2d Battalion was to take the nameless elevation. Subsequently, having liberated Gostseyevo, it would go over to pursuing the retreating enemy, supporting the regiment's right flank.

The 2d Rifle Battalion, in using the results of the artillery fire, in cooperation with the 1st Battalion was to attack the enemy on the nameless elevation and the strongpoint of Glodovo. In the aim of supporting the battalion's actions, the regiment's artillery was to interdict enemy flanking fire from elev. 96.0. Subsequently, the battalion was to continue the offensive on the axis to the southern outskirts of Gostseyevo, Baranets and in cooperation with the 1st Rifle Battalion go over to pursuing the retreating enemy.

The 3d Rifle Battalion had been ordered to move up behind the 2d Rifle Battalion and after capturing the line of Gostseyevo, Glodovo, be ready to enter battle from a line 500 m to the southwest of Gostseyevo for exploiting the success from behind the right flank. The commitment to battle was to be supported by the regiment artillery group by a 15-minute intense shelling.

Then the regiment's commander pointed to the direction of a possible enemy counterattack and set tasks for the rifle battalions and artillery to repel it.

Cooperation for carrying out the subsequent task was set according to the same scheme but with a smaller degree of detail. At the end of the instructions all the subunits were informed of the liaison signals worked out by the regiment's staff. The questions of cooperation in the regiment were drawn up in the form of a combat planning table.

Well organized cooperation in the regiment was a crucial factor for achieving success in combat as the regiment successfully carried out the combat task given it.

A study of the experience of the conduct of combat actions during the years of the Great Patriotic War shows that the commanders and staffs gave great attention to cooperation and viewed it as a most important condition for achieving victory over the enemy. The experience gained on the battlefields must be constantly studied, as it is also timely at present.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Sbornik boyevykh dokumentov Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Collection of Combat Documents of the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, No 4, 1948, p 3.
2. "Direktivnoye pismo Stavki Verkhovnogo Glavnokomandvaniya ot 10 yanvarya 1942 g." [Directive Letter of Hq SHC of 10 January 1942].
3. BUP-42 [Infantry Field Manual 1942], Chapt. 12, Arts. 433, 434, 444.
4. Ibid., Chapt. 12, Arts. 435-443.
5. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 386, inv. 8707, file 1, sheet 61.
6. Ibid., file 2, sheets 14-16.
7. "Taktika v boyevykh primerakh: Polk" [Tactics in Combat Examples: The Regiment], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1974, pp 69-71.

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FOOD, FODDER PROCUREMENT FROM LOCAL RESOURCES

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[Article by Col A.V. Litvinov, candidate of military sciences: "On Procurement of Food and Fodder From Local Resources"]

[Text] From the very first days of the Great Patriotic War, food supply for the nation's population and Armed Forces was under the constant supervision of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee, the GKO [State Defense Committee] and the USSR Council of People's Commissars [SNK]. On 1 July 1941, the USSR SNK established the Food and Uniform Supply Committee of the Soviet Army which was headed by the First Deputy Chairman of the SNK A.I. Mikoyan. A specially established group consisting of V.M. Kolyaskin, A.L. Chernyak, A.N. Morozov and others became the working body supervising the food and fodder supply of the fronts. All questions related to the allocating of supplies and the formulating of the release of food to the NKO [People's Commissariat of Defense] from the state reserves were settled by this group. It worked in close contact with the rear leadership and the food supply service of the Soviet Army.

Satisfying the enormous requirements of the Armed Forces for food by drawing on centralized resources and supplies represented a serious problem for the national economy. Its solution was complicated by the forced retreat of the Soviet troops to the east. The state was deprived of major supplies of food which were at warehouses in the occupied areas. In line with this, the use of local food and fodder resources existing in the rear zone of the fronts assumed great importance for supplying the fronts.

On 4 July 1941, the Chief Quartermaster of the Soviet Army, Lt Gen Intend Serv A.V. Khrulev, on the basis of the USSR SNK decree, approved the "Instructions on the Procedure for Procuring Agricultural Products in Areas of Military Operations and in the Frontline Zone." On 16 July, the Instructions were clarified and supplemented. The supply bodies and the troops of the operational army were ordered to procure (purchase) food and fodder from kolkhozes, sovkhoses, individual farms, state and cooperative organizations.

* * *

The task of organizing and carrying out the procurement of food and fodder from local resources in areas liberated from the enemy was first raised for the food service in the period of the Moscow counteroffensive and the general offensive of the Soviet Army in the winter of 1941-1942. The experience of the first procurements showed that along with economic difficulties there were also ones of an organizational nature, that is: the small size of the food supply service, the weakness of the procurement bodies and the multiple levels of command.

By the Decree of 24 January 1942, the GKO strengthened the food supply bodies in all elements of the Soviet Army rear. The Food Supply Directorate was reorganized as the Main Food Supply Directorate of the Soviet Army (GUPS) and directly under the chief of the Soviet Army Rear Services. The GUPS was headed by Maj Gen Intend Serv D.V. Pavlov. Directorates were set up in the fronts and in the armies there were food supply sections which were directly under the chief of the rear services of a front (army). Somewhat later, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief I.V. Stalin pointed out to the GUPS chief that the food and fodder supply of the fronts should be based chiefly upon current production and procurement of local means in the rear areas of the fronts and armies and in a number of instances also in the frontline zone. Only in exceptional instances should they resort to the use of food from the state reserves in the interests of the front.(1)

On the kolkhozes and sovkhoses located in the positions of the organic, army or front rear, agricultural products were procured within the amount of current needs of the troops according to unified state procurement prices. The state, cooperative and other procurement organizations released food and fodder at the wholesale ex-factory state prices. The depots of the fronts (armies) accepted food and fodder by check demand or by document after payment in money. The check demand (document) was proof of the carrying out of state deliveries for the need of the Soviet Army.(2)

Considering the petition of the GUPS chief and the request of the chief of the Soviet Army Rear Services, the USSR SNK in July 1942 issued orders for organizing regular procurement bodies or procurement groups in the fronts and armies. In the food supply directorates (UPS) of the fronts, such groups consisted of five officers and in the food sections of the armies, seven officers. It was their duty to procure potatoes, vegetables and hay from local resources. In August of the same year, by an order of the USSR SNK, agents of the USSR People's Commissariat of Procurements (Narkomzag) were introduced to aid the procurement bodies of the fronts and armies. They were the intermediaries between the army food supply bodies and the local soviet procurement organizations. They were responsible for discovering local food resources and supervising the work of the oblast and rayon agents of the Narkomzag, as well as the state and cooperative procurement agents.

Together with the food supply directorates and sections of the fronts and armies, the agents established procurement plans, they allocated and assigned to the fronts and armies prospective procurement areas and coordinated the actions of the front UPS with the local procurement bodies and the local authorities. All of this made it possible for the procurement groups to promptly study and effectively allocate the existing food and fodder

resources; to rationally utilize the allocated forces for conducting procurements; to determine the volume and assortment of possible food procurements in the assigned oblasts and rayons; to detect the presence and state of warehouse facilities, agricultural processing enterprises, reserves and sources for obtaining fuel, electric power and other resources.

The procurement groups drew up a specific procurement plan for each oblast (rayon), they set the procurement dates and determined the demand and sources for allocating transport, manpower, crating and fuel. Then the procurement plans were coordinated with the local oblast (rayon) authorities and approved by the military councils of the fronts. Excerpts of the plans were issued to officials responsible for carrying out the measures. The agents of the Narkomzag on the fronts (armies) informed the oblast (rayon) agents of the plans and volumes of procurement for crops, and also named the specific procurers. The procurements made were entered for the oblasts (rayons) in the centralized delivery plan according to the types of procured products. The food supply bodies of the fronts (armies) were notified by the agents of the Narkomzag as to the processing enterprises (mills, groat plants, slaughter houses, refrigeration capacity, storage capacity and so forth) as well as points for concentrating and storing food and fodder supplies.

Such planning and organization of procurement made it possible for the rear bodies of the fronts to more effectively accept products with their subsequent delivery to the front storage points (dumps) or processing enterprises. By so doing great effectiveness was achieved in supervising the fulfillment of the plans, claims and differences between the suppliers and receivers of the products were minimized, empty runs and stoppages of transport were reduced as well as the time of freight handling and warehousing work.

The organizing of the TOE procurement bodies was immediately felt in procurements for the 1942 harvesting season. The fronts began to utilize the local food supply on a more planned and effective basis. Using reserve regiments and battalions of recuperating personnel for the work, the fronts and armies without detriment to combat operations were able to fully satisfy their annual demand for grain, vegetables, hay and certain other products.

Thus, the rear services of the Bryansk Front located on the territory of six oblasts, in using their own procurement bodies and additionally assigned personnel and transport, not only helped the kolkhozes carry out the 1942 delivery plan but also were able to receive from them a significant amount of grain and meat from the deliveries of the future year. By their own efforts the troops prepared over 32 percent of the annual demand of the Soviet Army for hay.⁽³⁾ For 1942, using local resources, the troops also procured, 10.2 percent of the total demand of the Armed Forces for grain products, 5.7 percent of the meat products, 2.3 percent of the fats, 91.6 percent of the potatoes and vegetables and 4 percent of the tobacco products.⁽⁴⁾ Here the given indicators were achieved at a time when a special procurement apparatus in the food service of the Soviet Army (that is, before July 1942) still did not exist.

The experience gained in the first period of the war of procuring agricultural products from local resources in the front rear was generalized in a joint

directive issued on 16 December 1942 by the Soviet Army GUPS and the USSR Narkomzag. Beginning in August 1943, the directive permitted the troops to independently procure grain crops, vegetables and fodder in an amount of their annual requirement. Responsibility for organizing and carrying out the procurements as well as for harvesting grains, vegetables and fodder within a 30-km frontline zone and on liberated territory was entrusted to the first members of the front military councils. These measures increased the responsibility of the front (army) command for the state and supply of the troops with the necessary reserves of materiel, they contributed to the fuller utilization of local food resources for current supply and establishing the necessary reserves and also reduced the amount of centralized deliveries from the state supplies and reserves.

By an order of the deputy people's commissar of defense and chief of the Soviet Army Rear Services of 7 January 1943, the size of the procurement groups in certain fronts was increased up to 10-15 men. The procurement groups were entrusted with a larger range of duties: the organization of food and fodder procurement, haying, the planting of vegetables, the harvesting of untended crops, the keeping and fattening of hogs, the catching of fish, the harvesting of wild greens, mushrooms, fruits and berries.

To aid the chief of the regimental food supply, two assistants were introduced on 3 April 1943 for carrying out procurements from local resources. However, in practice one of them was transferred to the food supply group of the formation for strengthening it. Later such practice, as being more rational, was legitimized by an NKO order.

Beginning with the second half of 1943, the volume of food and fodder procurements from local resources made it possible for the GKO to release a majority of the southern and central fronts from centralized food supply of bread products, vegetables and fodder. Moreover, the food services of the southern fronts from the crop of that year turned over to the state more than 384,000 tons of grain, including 197,000 tons dispatched to supply the northern fronts and around 62,000 tons of grain for the population of Leningrad.(7)

In October 1943, the GKO again entrusted the leadership of army supply of food and fodder to the Chief Quartermaster of the Soviet Army. In accord with this decision, the Soviet Army GUPS was converted into the Food Supply directorate and became part of the Main Quartermaster Directorate. The food bodies of the fronts (districts) and armies were also included in the quartermaster directorates. In the quartermaster directorates of the fronts (districts) there were food supply sections and in the armies, departments.(8)

After the Soviet Army had liberated the Chernozem areas of the RSFSR and the grain-producing regions of the Left Bank Ukraine, the question arose of altering the then existing procedure for the centralized supply of food to the army. Emergency measures had to be taken to complete the grain procurements in the nation, particularly in the liberated areas. For this it was essential to quickly bring in personnel and transport from the fronts and together with the civilian organization procure grain for the needs of the army, the urban population and the inhabitants of the liberated areas.

On 15 November 1943, a special decree of the VKP(b) Central Committee and the USSR SNK was signed. For providing help and supervising the fulfillment of the decree on the spot, the members of the VKP(b) Central Committee and the GKO A.A. Andreyev, N.A. Voznesenskiy, A.N. Kosygin, A.I. Mikoyan, N.M. Shvernik and others were sent out. The group of A.I. Mikoyan included: the Deputy Chairman of the RSFSR SNK A.V. Gritsenko; N.I. Pronin who was performing the duties of the USSR people's commissar of the food industry; the chief of the procurement group of the Business Directorate of the USSR SNK B.V. Zuyev; the chief of staff of the Soviet Army Rear Services, Gen M.P. Milovskiy; the chief of the Food Supply Directorate of the Soviet Army, Gen D.V. Pavlov and others.

A procurement section was organized in the Soviet Army Food Supply Directorate. The fronts also began organizing sections with from 21 to 62 men, while the armies had procurement departments of 7 men (in individual armies, 11 men). Procurement groups consisting of 2 officers were introduced in the formations instead of procurement inspectors.(9)

The food service institutions and the procurement bodies of the Soviet Army not only procured food and fodder from local resources for the needs of the army but also provided substantial aid to the national economy in harvesting. Thus, the Second Ukrainian Front (deputy commander for rear services, Lt Gen V.I. Vostukhov) assigned 5,500 men and 800 motor vehicles for helping in harvesting in Poltava Oblast. The command of the Fourth Ukrainian Front (deputy commander for rear services, Maj Gen N.P. Anisimov) organized 30 teams of 4 officers and 100 soldiers each and sent them to harvest in Donetsk (Stalinsk) and Zaporozhye Oblasts. Some 600 men traveled to Nikolayev Oblast.(10) The First Belorussian Front (deputy commander for rear services, Lt Gen N.A. Antipenko) to aid the procurement bodies assigned 1,500 officers, 27,000 soldiers and over 1,200 motor vehicles.(11) As a total in 1943, the troops of the operational army, the internal military districts and the personnel of the Soviet Army Food Service Directorate procured around 7 million tons of food and fodder.(12)

In 1944, in the course of the rapid Soviet Army offensive, the rear frontiers of the fronts were frequently moved and for this reason the procurement areas which had been previously assigned to the fronts were often behind them. In such instances the command of the fronts took procurement decisions on a basis of the special instructions of the staff of the Soviet Army Rear Services which set planning procurement indicators specifically for each oblast outside their rear area. This was dictated by the shortage of transport in the liberated areas and the weakness of the local procurement organization. The products transported by front transport was turned over to the local procurement organizations according to the kolkhoz and sovkhoz documents and to their account. The procurement organizations at the end of the day drew up a statement of the amount of transported products. The front food service representatives received a security receipt for the delivered products. Subsequently, the products were dispatched to the front dumps without schedule orders from the food service directorates.

As before, the fronts allocated significant forces to conduct the procurement work, as can be seen from Table 1.

Table 1

Forces Assigned by Third Ukrainian Front for Procurement Work in 1944*

Time of Work	Assigned Forces			
	Personnel	Horses	Vehicles	Tractors
22 July	4,234	562	593	12
31 July	12,346	368	1,062	11
5 August	29,460	3,554	1,015	25
16 August	27,809	3,497	960	39

* TsAMO [Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense], folio 243, inv. 2963, file 42, sheet 233.

The forces of not only the front procurement bodies but also the center participated in procurement and transporting of products obtained outside the boundaries of the front rear area. Thus, in the spring of 1944, upon orders of the chief of the Soviet Army Rear Services, special procurement groups of the Center rear services were set up. The composition of a group included: 100-150 officers, 1 or 2 work battalions and 1 or 2 vehicle regiments. Each group served up to three oblasts. Subsequently, beginning in the second half of 1944, the groups began to be assigned according to the principle of one per oblast. This significantly facilitated the control and supervision of their work. The number of individual types of products procured by the Soviet Army Food Service in 1943-1944 on the territory of our country is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Amount of Products Procured by Soviet Army Food Service in 1943-1944

Years	Total Products Procured, tons	I n c l u d i n g			
		Food Grain, tons	Groat Grain, tons	Feed Grain, tons	Oil Crops, tons
1943	476,600	233,800	42,200	168,300	32,300
1944	2,433,200	981,900	295,600	1,063,000	92,700

The moving of hostilities outside the Soviet Union was also reflected in the food supply service. It had to adapt its work and resolve the questions of procuring agricultural products from local resources. The task also arose of using the enterprises of private and state industry for the needs of the army. The difficulty was that it was no longer possible to carry out the procurements according to the existing forms and methods. In each nation entered by the Soviet liberator soldiers it was essential to seek out various work methods depending upon the actually existing situation and coordinate the measures carried out with the local or state authorities. Thus, on Polish territory, the fronts procured food and fodder basically through the rural cooperative organization Rolnik which operated upon instructions of the Polish National Liberation Committee. On Romanian and Hungarian territory, procurements were made through the state apparatus and local authorities. In Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Austria food and fodder procurements from local resources were made in very limited amounts by the rear bodies of the Soviet Army together with the local authorities.

In speaking about the particular features of the procurement (purchase) of food and fodder on the territory of the liberated states, the following must be pointed out. Representatives of commercial circles (private suppliers), and cooperative organizations recommended by the local authorities were also involved in the purchases. The wholesale purchasing prices were set considering market conditions after approval by the government of the given state and ratified by the front military councils. Centralized procurements (purchases) were entrusted to the front procurement sections and army departments. Special procurement directorates were organized for each country. The food supply bodies of the fronts allocated procurements groups, dumps and receiving points in accord with the procurement plans approved by the front military councils. Food was accepted following special-form documents and orders, purchase receipts and waybills which were drawn up in Russian and the language of that country where food and fodder were being purchased. All purchases were paid for by the front financial service in a centralized procedure or in cash.

Thus, during the years of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet Army Food Service successfully handled the task of continuous supply of fodder and food for the troops. The total consumption of food and fodder for the Soviet Army was around 40 million tons. Here over 20 million tons of food and grain fodder(13) were procured and used from local resources or over one-half of the total demand.

The total volume of food procured by the troops of the Soviet Army from local resources during the period of the Great Patriotic War is shown in Table 3.

The complete and thorough utilization of local food and fodder resources made it possible to create the necessary supplies (resources) for supporting the combat actions of the front troops. Starting from the second year of the war, local resources of grain, vegetables, fodder and hay were the basic sources of troop supply for certain fronts. Procurements (purchases) of food and fodder from local resources helped to increase state supplies and also made it possible to avoid significant shipments of food to the fronts from the center

of the nation. The transport released as a result of this was employed for delivering equipment, fuel, ammunition and weapons to the troops.

Table 3

Volume of Food Procured by Soviet Army From Local Resources
(in % of total demand of operational army)*

Type of Food	Procurement From Local Resources on Soviet Territory			
	1942	1943	1944	1945
Grain products, grain fodder converted into grain	10.2	53.0	68.2	15.1
Meat products	5.7	10.0	--	--
Various fats	2.3	4.9	--	--
Sugar	--	--	--	--
Tea	--	--	--	--
Salt	--	--	--	--
Potatoes and vegetables	91.6	80.5	63.2	31.7
Tobacco, shag tobacco	4.0	1.1	--	--

* "Sluzhba intendantskogo snabzheniya za 30 let" [Quartermaster Supply Service Over 30 Years], p 58.

The system of procurement bodies and institutions of the Soviet Army was finally established by the end of the second period of the war. At the Center and on the fronts there were procurement sections and in the armies there were departments while the formations had procurement groups. The wide involvement of local food resources for planned troop supply was one of the most important tasks of the food supply service and it successfully carried this out.

The experience of organizing and conducting procurement of agricultural products, fodder and raw materials by the forces of the troop units and formations in combat areas and in the frontline zone merits careful study and generalization. It provides many instructive examples of the correct employment of local resources for troop food supply. It has not lost its pertinence in our times.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Tyl Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Rear Services of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1977, pp 196, 197.

2. Such a procedure for accepting food from local resources existed until mid-1942.
3. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 86, inv. 271095, file 3, sheet 3.
4. "Sluzhba intendantskogo snabzheniya za 30 let" [Quartermaster Supply Service Over 30 Years], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1960, p 58.
5. [Not in text]
6. [Not in text]
7. TsAMO, folio 87, inv. 34009, file 75, sheet 102.
8. "Tyl Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh...", pp 208, 209.
9. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 1, 1978, p 64.
10. Ibid., pp 69, 70-71.
11. TsAMO, folio 87, inv. 235548, file 20, sheet 25.
12. Ibid., folio 67, inv. 227916, file 163, sheets 5-8.
13. Ibid., folio 27, inv. 37009, file 75, sheet 358; folio 67, inv. 267215, file 14, sheets 26-33.

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EXPERIENCE OF 1ST TORPEDO AIR REGIMENT

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[Article, published under the heading "Party Political Work," by Lt Col (Ret) M.L. Lvov: "From the Work Experience of the 1st Torpedo Air Regiment"; during the described period the author was a correspondent of the newspaper of the 61st Air Brigade of the Baltic Fleet Air Forces POBEDA and knew the aviators described in the article]

[Text] In the summer of 1941, the troops of the Soviet Army were heavily engaged, fighting for each inch of the homeland. In August, upon a decision of Hq SHC, bombing commenced on the Nazi capital. Party political work played a major role in mobilizing the military aviators to successfully carry out the crucial task of the command.

Close-knit and battle-tested personnel was in the 1st Torpedo Air Regiment of the Baltic Fleet which was involved in making the bombing strikes against Berlin. The pilots of this unit were able to operate in any situation, during the day and at night, they had experience in flights at maximum range for carrying out torpedo attacks, laying mines, as well as bombing strikes against ground targets, including tank and mechanized columns.

The Commander of the Naval Aviation, Lt Gen Avn S.F. Zhavoronkov, recalled: "After the first raids by German bombers on Moscow, the Staff of the Naval Air Forces got the idea of organizing retaliatory strikes by naval aviation against the German capital, Berlin. Soon this idea was formalized in a proposal."(1)

The people's commissar of the Navy approved this proposal and reported on it to Headquarters. I.V. Stalin decided to use in carrying out the mission two squadrons of the Baltic Fleet Air Forces which were best trained for night flights.

On the 4th of August, 15 crews of the 1st Regiment headed by its commander, Col Ye.N. Preobrachenskiy, made a flight from Leningrad to the island airfield at Kagul settlement. The day passed in intense work of camouflaging the aircraft and arming the technical personnel with small arms, rifles and grenades. During the first hours of the stay on the island, active party

political got underway. S.F. Zhavoronkov, Ye.N. Preobrachenskiy and the Reg Commissar G.Z. Oganezov conducted a talk with the crew members. A frank and detailed description of the situation on the fronts by the Naval Aviation commander ended with the words of how important was the mission received by the unit. The squadron commanders, Capts A.Ya. Yefremov, M.N. Plotkin, V.A. Grechishnikov and many others assured the command that they would break through to the enemy's lair. The aviators worked out the mission in detail and precisely set the targets for the bombing strikes. Only the day and hour of take-off were not given.

In profoundly understanding the importance of the received mission, the regiment's commander, Col Ye.N. Preobrachenskiy, took direct part in organizing and conducting party political work. He possessed great experience as a propagandist, he had the gift of a speaker, he was able to correctly organize the talk, choose the most impressive facts, persuade the personnel of the need for one or another measure and lead the dangerous flight. The pilots remembered his penetrating talks and political information.

During the evening of 7 August, the heavily loaded bombers took off. Only altitude was their defense against the antiaircraft gunners and enemy fighters. However, the boldness and reasonable risk based on precise calculation proved effective. Having dropped their bombs on the targets, all 15 aircraft headed by the flagship of Ye.N. Preobrachenskiy returned to the airfield. The mission was accomplished. The first attack in the history of the war on the Nazi capital by Soviet aviation had come about. This was a source of joy to everyone and it was such that they forgot the fatigue and danger of the flight home.

After the first raid on Berlin, three engine technicians turned to Preobrazhenskiy with a request to be sent to the front, to the naval infantry so that they could defend the motherland with weapons in hand.

"We have already sent everyone we can spare," replied the officer, "and you are performing a crucial task of preparing the aircraft for combat."

Seemingly no one would doubt how important the engine specialists were in the regiment. However, the regimental commander realized that not everyone understood this. He went down the line with the squadron commander Yefremov.

All the technical personnel, engineers, technicians and engine specialists, were already assembled by the combat aircraft.

"Comrades," said Preobrazhenskiy, addressing his subordinates. "I want to talk about the equipment. It has operated perfectly. That is how important your work is. All of us together have set the Nazis on fire. Allow me to express my gratitude."

Thus, the engineers, technicians, engine and weapons specialists received their first commendation for the bombing raid against the enemy capital. And several hours later arrived a telegram from Headquarters with the Supreme Commander-in-Chief congratulating the Baltic pilots on successfully carrying out the mission.

The battalion commissar G.Z. Oganezov was the immediate organizer of party political work in the regiment. He saw to it that the party and Komsomol bureaus worked actively and that all the communists and Komsomol members took daily part in social life. The commissar supported the initiative of the party organizer, the Senior Political Instructor A.P. Uskov and the Komsomol organizer, Jr Sgt V.V. Belov, and based all his work on trust. He himself showed a very sensitive attitude toward the men, he was able to promptly spot and commend an outstanding pilot, navigator or technician, and popularized the achievements of the best aviators. Under his leadership combat leaflets were produced regularly and political information sessions, talks and various political indoctrination measures were carried out.

G.Z. Oganezov was constantly concerned that all the technical personnel profoundly realize the responsibility for the results of their actions. He made it a rule to monitor by radio the summaries of the Sovinformburo [Soviet Information Bureau] and the most important announcements from Moscow. Oganezov learned about the bombing of Berlin even before the return of Preobrazhenskiy and his pilots from the raid. The commissar spoke with the technical personnel and the antiaircraft gunners and inspired them to better carry out their assigned duties.

After the first bombing raid against Berlin, the chief of the Political Section of the Baltic Fleet Air Forces, Brig Commissar L.N. Prunik who had flown in to the regiment, in a talk with the aviators, commented on their high combat zeal. The commissar of Baltic aviation praised the party political work and in particular the combat leaflets which had been put out at the airfield as well as the skillful use of the radio broadcasts from Moscow. Oganezov again asked permission to fly out on a mission as an aircraft gunner but the brigade commissar replied that he had much to do on the ground.

When the raids of the Nazi capital began to involve long-range bomber aircraft, not only S.F. Zhavoronkov and Ye.N. Preobrazhenskiy but also G.Z. Oganezov had more to do. The commissar of the first regiment aided his army confreres in more efficiently obtaining information and more quickly introducing the experience of the navy pilots. He organized meetings for the personnel of naval and long-range aviation. Ye.N. Preobrazhenskiy, A.Ya. Yefremov, V.A. Grechishnikov, M.N. Plotkin and P.I. Khokhlov spoke with the arriving pilots on the particular features of operations over the sea and on the psychological attitude during flights out of sight of land. G.Z. Oganezov and the regimental Chekist [internal affairs personnel], Sr Political Instructor I.T. Shevchenko spoke with him on the need to be vigilant.

The tasks confronting the regiment demanded from Oganezov in certain instances initiative and intense labor and in others personal courage. He repeatedly had to head the ground service in eliminating the consequences of enemy bombings of the airfield. Together with the men he filled in the craters so that the aircraft returning from the raid on Berlin could land normally. Oganezov literally dropped from fatigue but did not cease working.

During one of the first Nazi raids on the airfield, the antiaircraft gunners were unable to promptly spot the enemy. The young soldiers from one of the crews became confused and stopped firing. Oganezov paid a call on them immediately after the bombing. Of course, the commissar said, it is terrible and dangerous during the bombing. But it is even more dangerous to duck one's head instead of skillfully utilizing the gun assigned to you. The political worker decided to be present in the battery during the next raid. He was not far off when again the Junkers again arrived. Having run to the firing position, Oganezov saw that the gunner had been wounded by shrapnel from an exploding bomb. The machine gun mount fell silent.

"Fire," the commissar ordered the No 2 man, and himself took his place.

Five antiaircraft gunners were wounded during the raid of the Junkers, but not a single man lost his head and no one ceased firing.

G.Z. Oganezov carefully assembled and generalized various materials relating to the raids of Soviet aviation against Berlin and analyzed letters found on downed Nazi pilots and killed enemy soldiers and officers. Several such letters had been sent to the regiment by the Baltic Fleet Political Directorate. The commissar used all of the assembled documents in political indoctrination as they better than anything else unmasked the deceptiveness of Nazi propaganda and its attempts in every possible way to overlook and conceal the fact of the bombing of Berlin by Soviet aviation. One of the letters addressed by a resident of Berlin to her husband who (although she did not yet know it) had been killed at Leningrad stated: "My dear Ernst!... The gloomy thoughts do not leave me. Recently at night we have been reached by bombers. They say that the English have bombed us. But we are perfectly aware that during these nights we have been bombed by the Russians. They are taking revenge for Moscow. Berlin has been constantly shaken by the exploding of bombs.... What I want to tell you is that since the Russians have appeared over our heads, you cannot imagine how hard it has now become for us.... I have the presentiment, Ernst, that before my letter reaches you, if I am able to get it to the postbox, I will no longer be among the living.... There is the noise again!... Farewell!"(2)

Such letters showed that the enemy capital did not know peace and quiet because of the bombing strikes of Soviet aviation. They helped instill in the personnel a sacred hate for the enemy and to mobilize the men to unstinting actions.

It should be pointed out that G.Z. Oganezov skillfully maintained close contacts with the local population. The residents of the farms came to the commissar not only with requests but also alerts about the appearance of Nazi spies and saboteurs. For example, a fisherman who was the first to see Nazi saboteurs informed Grigoriy Zakharovich [Oganezov] about this and brought with him a German-Russian phrase book dropped by the enemy. Oganezov immediately held a talk with the aviators on the need for great vigilance. The Baltic sailors vowed to do everything to carry out the mission of the Supreme High Command.

The political worker gave particular importance to individual work with the men and to sincere talks precisely with those who in a specific instance were responsible for a certain question, be it the rebuilding of the airfield, increasing the combat readiness of the air defenses, strengthening discipline and vigilance on the watch in guarding the aircraft and the resting personnel. He was concerned that each aircraft from back home brought letters from relatives and close friends as well as newspapers.

The party meetings played an important role in mobilizing the personnel to successfully carry out the set mission. The first was held on 8 August several hours after the completion of the raid, when the greetings and commendation of I.V. Stalin were received. At the next meeting the communists discussed the question of increasing the weight of the bombs destined for the raid on the Nazi capital. The attempt to carry a 1,000-kg bomb on the DB-3 with worn-out engines ended in failure and almost cost the life of the crew of V.A. Grechishnikov. But still the Baltic sailors were able to increase the bombload. Upon the appeal of Ye.N. Preobrazhenskiy and G.Z. Oganezov, the personnel thought up variations for solving this problem and voiced their ideas at an open party meeting. It was proposed on each aircraft to leave only one gunner-radio operator and to disassemble the heavy steel frames for the exterior torpedo mountings which created backwash. The adopted idea was carried out. Boxes with in-flight repair tools had to be unloaded on the ground and even the belly machine guns removed. All of this made it possible to increase the bombload up to 800-900 kg.

The party organization did a great deal to strengthen order and organization and dealt strictly with the slightest deviation from the requirements of the regulations. A person guilty of violating discipline felt this strongly. During the first flight Sgt V.M. Krotenko was the gunner-radio operator on the commander's aircraft. Together with the flagship gunner-radio operator, Sr Sgt I.I. Rudakov, he had reported after the first bombing: "My position is Berlin. Mission accomplished. Returning to base." Out of happiness Krotenko had something to drink, feeling that "winners are not condemned." But he was wrong. The sentence was severe at the Komsomol and open party meetings. From that time the young communist, Sr Sgt V.A. Luchnikov, became part of the flagship crew. Krotenko took it hard. He was permitted to fly again but only in the crew of the regimental commander. The sergeant promised not to violate discipline any more. And he kept his word.

During the period of the raids on Berlin, the regimental commissar and the secretary of the party organization regularly instructed the communists to talk with the personnel and issued them other public assignments. Among those already mentioned, the Chief of Staff of the 3d Squadron, Maj M.I. Kotelnikov, stood out. By specialty he was a navigator. A participant in the Civil War and the senior communist in the regiment, Kotelnikov before going into aviation had served in the cavalry and had commanded a subunit fighting against the Basmachs in Central Asia. He had the respect of the personnel and organized training skillfully. He had contributed to the fact that the 3d Squadron had been awarded the Order of the Red Banner for combat successes in the Soviet-Finnish War. Initially M.I. Kotelnikov, as the staff commander, was not a crew member. But he gained permission to participate in the raids against the Nazi capital. His postflight information was stirring. The joy,

the pride, everything that he experienced dropping bombs on the liar of Naziism came across to the technicians and engine specialists and caused a fervent response. And that was the way it went. After each sortie the squadron chief of staff spoke to his fellow servicemen.

The flights to Berlin were difficult. On one such raid the DB-3 of Lt Leonov with Kotelnikov as a crew member did not make it back to the airfield. Not far from Leningrad, in landing without airport lights the aircraft had suffered a disaster.

A.Ya. Yefremov also spoke regularly with the men. The squadron commander was an optimist. His speeches to the pilots always evoked a lively interest and often turned into an easy discussion of the closest concerns of the aviators, including what bothered them most. Frequently he participated in putting out combat leaflets.

The communist and squadron commander V.A. Grechishnikov actively conducted political indoctrination work with the personnel. Restrained and unexcitable, he prepared for the assignment with the same carefulness which marked a true master not only in flying but in any other difficult matter too. The communist-agitator V.A. Grechishnikov participated in all the raids against Berlin. One can understand with what attention the aviators listened to their commander after his every return.

As a total from 8 August through 4 September, 9 raids were made from Saaremaa Island against Berlin with 81 aircraft sorties, including 55 ending with strikes on the enemy capital and the others against other military objectives. The Soviet pilots dropped 635 high-explosive bombs (from 50 to 250 kg) and incendiary bombs (from 1 to 50 kg) with a total weight of 34.5 tons. Moreover, leaflets were dropped over the Nazi capital. The bombing of targets in Berlin in 1941 had not so much military but political importance. These raids demonstrated to the entire world the courage and mastery of our pilots, they inspired the soldiers and workers of the rear to new feats, they clearly refuted the false assertions of Nazi propaganda about the destruction of Soviet aviation and unmasked the boasting of Goring who had asserted that "not a single bomb will fall on Berlin."(3)

The first Soviet commandant of Berlin, Hero of the Soviet Union, Col Gen N.A. Berzarin, in turning to the Baltic pilots on 9 May 1945, commented: "On the day of celebrating by all the people, the great holiday of our victory, the Soviet military who stormed Berlin warmly greet the naval aviation pilots of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet. You were the first at the beginning of the war to attack the German capital from the air. Now we, after the heroic storming, have entered this capital. Your raids against Berlin and strikes against the German Navy at sea, like the victorious path of our valorous soldiers leading to Berlin, will go down as vivid pages in the chronicle of the Great Patriotic War."(4)

This feat was on the very brink of the possible. The boldness of the organizers of the bombing strikes against Berlin fused with the great valor of the pilots, their unprecedented loyalty to the socialist motherland and their readiness to dedicate all their energies and life for the freedom of the

fatherland, for the Leninist party and the Soviet people. Party political work contributed enormously to the achieving of success. It helped the personnel of the 1st Regiment achieve new victories in subsequent battles. The regiment became the 1st Guards. Over the entire war it was one of the right flankers in the fighting at sea, having inscribed many vivid pages in its heroic history.

FOOTNOTES

1. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 4, 1969, p 65.
2. Petr Khokhlov, "Nad tremya moryami" [Over Three Seas], Moscow, Sovetskaya Rossiya, 1982, pp 96-97.
3. See: "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna 1941-1945: Entsiklopediya" [The Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945: An Encyclopedia], Moscow, Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1985, p 107.
4. LETCHIK BALTIKI, 10 May 1945.

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EMPLOYMENT OF INTELLIGENCE EQUIPMENT

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 87 (signed to press 22 Apr 87) pp 70-74

[Article, published under the heading: "Local Wars," by Col V.S. Kuznetsov, candidate of military sciences, docent: "The Employment of Intelligence Equipment"; the article was written from materials in the foreign press]

[Text] The experience of local wars has confirmed the important role of intelligence in achieving successful combat actions. In the opinion of foreign military specialists, in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, intelligence played an equally important role as aviation and the armored troops. Along with the testing out of combat equipment and weapons in local wars and conflicts, intelligence equipment has also been tested. Its development and employment have depended upon the conditions of the theaters of operations, upon the organization, tactics and weaponry of the belligerents.

During the aggressive war in South Vietnam, American troops along with radar, infrared, television, photographic and other reconnaissance equipment for the first time employed fundamentally new devices which were a reconnaissance-warning system. This was comprised of an aggregate of electronic intelligence devices (electronic data sensors), relays and the equipment of a data processing center).

The operating principle of the EDS is based on the relaying of seismic oscillations, changes in temperature, acoustical, magnetic and electromagnetic fields and other phenomena caused by the operating of combat and transport equipment, and by actions of the troops (personnel). Scattered over enemy territory the sensors sent information to the relays. From here they were transmitted by radio to the points and centers for the receiving and display of information and after processing were employed for setting the tasks to destroy the detected targets.

Over the period of the war in Indochina, the United States employed around 50 different types of EDS (15 seismic; 4 acoustical, electromagnetic and infrared, 3 combined and 8 mechanical) and 2 types of relays.(1)

The electronic intelligence devices made it possible for the U.S. Army to spot the enemy, to monitor the movement of its troops over roads, paths, canals and

rivers, to determine the location of ambushes and expose them as well as receive early warning of the offensive being prepared. Moreover, the sensors were employed for determining the location of troop concentrations, for observing a certain object and for assessing the results of air strikes. It was pointed out that many subunits were released from carrying out ordinary security and intelligence tasks, surprise enemy actions were excluded and it was possible to launch surprise fire strikes against the enemy. The EDS, as a rule, were set out by hand or dropped from helicopters. The time of day and weather conditions did not influence their operation.

In the U.S. divisions, as a rule, there was a ground observation section headed by the division's intelligence chief. For example, in the 25th Infantry Division by September 1969 in the combat area there were 17 sensor lines and 7 data reception and display stations and 6 months later there were 47 EDS lines of which 24 were monitored by aircraft.

In the combat zone of the 101st Airborne Division, the area where EDS were employed occupied an area of 40,000 sq km. This made it possible for the infantry battalion to effectively conduct combat in an area of 520 sq km (200 sq miles). Each platoon of a battalion had a set of PSID equipment which included 4 seismic-type sensors. The operating duration of the sensors was around 30 days. The receiving station where the information went was 500 m away.

The intelligence warning equipment was employed in the 101st Airborne Division combined with ground surveillance radars of the AN/PPS-4-5 or AN/TPS-5 and night vision instruments. Such integrated use of intelligence equipment made it possible for the Americans to carry out an effective surprise fire strike against the advancing enemy by employing artillery fire, air strikes and the detonating of directional mines. In conducting combat during the period of pursuit, the sensors were set on possible routes of retreat by helicopter. This made it possible for the American Command to promptly detect the direction of movement of the enemy columns and launch surprise fire strikes against them, to quickly regroup, to boost forces in threatened areas and relocate reinforcements, in extensively employing aeromobile infantry.

In order to prevent the enemy from moving materiel, it was essential to establish the location of enemy transport. For this the U.S. troops (in Vietnam) employed checkpoints the task of which was to determine the quantity and types of passing vehicles, the direction and speed of their movement. Each checkpoint set up in enemy positions represented a system of detection devices consisting of 10 EDS. Usually the sensors were positioned at equal intervals along a straight line cutting across a segment of the route at a given angle or in squares.(2)

In South Vietnam, for launching air attacks the aggressors employed a system worked out under the Eagle White Program. In this instance the data processing center coordinated the entire operation. It went into action with the start of planning the operation in order on the basis of data obtained by aerial photography and other means to locate the most important areas for placing the checkpoints. The sensors were set with great accuracy and their signals along with information received from other sources were fed into a

computer. Initially the targets to be hit were chosen and then the time was calculated for the enemy's arrival at the designated point. The tactical aviation personnel received information about this either from the center or via the air base and flight control center. The aircraft crew fed these data into the onboard computers which determined the direction of the flight and gave commands for the automatic release of the bombs.

The Commando Bolt method also became widespread. In accord with this, the entire territory was divided into areas. At the head of each stood a supervising officer. Under him were all the aircraft involved in setting remote sensors and the fighter bombers operating in his area. Information from the EDS went to screens. The picture of the areas reproduced in this manner made it possible for the supervising officer to directly monitor the movement of enemy equipment and actions and provide target designation for the aircraft. The crew fed the target coordinates into the onboard computer devices which determined the direction of flight and the time of attacking the target.

The employment of EDS in South Vietnam, in the opinion of foreign military specialists, made it possible to reduce the aviation detail by 25 percent and increase the damage caused to the enemy by 4-fold.

The EDS were also employed on rivers for monitoring the movement of South Vietnamese patriots. The information collected by them made it possible for the specially established U.S. river flotilla to successfully conduct combat operations, particularly in the Mekong River Delta, where prior to this the national-liberation forces had been invulnerable. The use of the intelligence-warning systems, in the opinion of Western specialists, made it possible for the Americans "to fight the enemy with weapons and not men, by firepower and not manpower." The sensors helped take a step toward automating combat actions.(3)

During the war in Southeast Asia for effective fighting at night the U.S. Army widely employed night vision instruments. Mounted on combat vehicles and aircraft, they provided an opportunity not only to detect objects but also carry out aimed fire at them. In this same war, they tested out the "night window" television system designed to reconnoiter the battlefield and observe the terrain with low levels of illumination.

In the course of the combat in Vietnam, the U.S. Ground Troops also employed radars for reconnoitering moving ground targets. The radars tracked the movement of enemy subunits and combat equipment and determined their coordinates. Radars of the AN/MPO-4A type were employed to get a fix on the firing positions of firing artillery weapons, mortars and unguided missile launchers as well as for correcting the fire of their own artillery. In the area of the aggressor's division there were up to 50 different radars which provided radar surveillance of the enemy to a depth of 20 km from the forward edge. In the opinion of foreign military specialists, radar was the most dependable means for conducting tactical reconnaissance. Their main advantage was the ability to conduct continuous surveillance of large areas and gain data on the enemy in a real time scale.

Thus, the wide employment of intelligence equipment in the war in Vietnam made it possible for the American command to monitor the arrival of fresh patriotic forces from the north, to determine the direction of their movement and detect the positions of field artillery, command posts and other installations.

In the Arab-Israeli wars, for conducting reconnaissance of the terrain and enemy installations in the near tactical zone for determining target coordinates and correcting artillery fire, the subunits of the Israeli Ground Troops also widely employed various intelligence and reconnaissance equipment.

The basic means for surveilling the enemy at night in the Israeli Army was the infrared (IR) devices which were mounted on armored personnel carriers, helicopters and tanks. The Israeli tanks, in addition, were equipped with laser rangefinders. In comparison with the previously employed stereoscopic and monocular devices, the laser rangefinders determined the distance to the target with several-fold greater precision. According to foreign estimates, due to their employment the combat capabilities of the tanks were significantly increased.

Radar reconnaissance of enemy targets was carried out by the forces of organic and artillery observation and reconnaissance employing both America-produced and Israeli-developed radars. Thus, in 1982, Israel successfully employed the EL/M 2121 ground radar for battlefield surveillance. With it it was possible to detect targets moving over the earth or close to it as well as hovering helicopters, using signals returned from the planes of the turning rotor. Here the detection range for airborne targets reached 240 km, for a motor vehicle 70 km, and the fix accuracy was 15 m for range and 0.5 degree for azimuth.(4)

For detecting the firing positions of firing field artillery and mortar guns and volley fire the Israeli Army employed various sound metering systems. Their sensors were deployed 2 km from the forward edge and along a front of up to 20 km. The collected intelligence data went to a central data processing point where the acoustical information was supplemented by meteorological and the computer produced the position of the Arab artillery firing positions. One sound-metering system could simultaneously determine up to 20-30 firing positions of enemy artillery weapons.(5)

While during the period of the local wars in Southeast Asia, reconnaissance drones were employed by the Americans only sporadically, in the Arab-Israeli wars they were widely employed combined with other intelligence equipment. The drones were equipped with television and photographic equipment, as well as various electronic reconnaissance devices. For photographing installations in the tactical zone, the American-produced MQM-74A was employed and in the operational depth the AQM-34P. The altitude of flight here reached 10-15 km.

Widely employed in the Israeli Army for final reconnaissance were the Scout drones equipped with television equipment and these carried out reconnaissance several minutes before the attack. This made it possible for the Israelis to gain dependable data on a real time scale and effectively hit enemy installations.(6)

The Chukar drones were launched into the Syrian areas of concentrated radioelectronic equipment. Their altitude of flight was 500-2,000 m. During the period of the flight of the drones, electronic reconnaissance stations located on the forward mountain peaks or on airplanes (helicopters) carried out electronic reconnaissance of the Syrian electronic equipment responding to the flight of the reconnaissance drone.

Israel also employed the RF-4 reconnaissance aircraft for conducting visual observation of enemy facilities and aerial photography of the Syrian system of defenses, the concentration areas of second echelons and reserves as well as for determining the degree of effectiveness of its strikes. The Miflias reconnaissance equipment mounted on these aircraft included side-viewing radars, infrared and laser equipment as well as three or four cameras. A special periscope was mounted in the pilot's cockpit for viewing the area scanned. The aerial cameras could be turned within limits of 25 degrees to both sides and this made it possible to have direct and oblique photography in one flight.

For conducting air reconnaissance and securing information on the organization of the command system of the Arab air forces and air defense, Israel made integrated use of the radars of ground subunits deployed on the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, the airborne technical reconnaissance subunits as well as combat aircraft carrying special devices on board. In the opinion of the Western Press, this made it possible to effectively detect the operating of Arab electronic equipment in a broad range and determine the location of radar stations and the command posts for the positions of the anti-aircraft missile systems and aviation.

Substantiation of this would be, for example, the fact that Israeli fighters scrambled simultaneously (and sometimes 1 or 2 minutes before) with the taking off of Syrian aircraft.(7)

Israel's reconnaissance systems of the Sotas type were a surprise for the Syrians. These employed modern battlefield surveillance radars with a very deep range. The side-viewing radars carried on aircraft and helicopters with high resolution (several meters), regardless of the weather conditions and the time of day, without entering the air space covered by the Syrian air defenses, could detect enemy installations to a depth of 100 km. It has been pointed out that such employment of this system made it possible to launch surprise and effective strikes against Arab facilities.

An analysis of the employment of reconnaissance and intelligence equipment by the U.S. and Israeli armies in local wars has shown the important significance of this equipment for gaining intelligence information about the enemy as well as their integrated use making it possible to recreate the actual situational picture.

On the basis of the experience of local wars, the military leadership of the aggressive NATO bloc, in judging from the materials of the foreign press, is giving great attention to further increasing and improving reconnaissance and intelligence equipment. Here preference is given to those which provide around-the-clock dependable reconnaissance under various meteorological and

climatic conditions in any theaters of operations with both natural and intentional interference.

FOOTNOTES

1. MILITARY REVIEW, No 3, 1967, pp 92-96.
2. NATIONAL DEFENSE, May 1973, pp 133-146.
3. CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, 1970, PE 9213-E 9214.
4. INTERNATIONAL DEFENSE REVIEW, No 7, 1983, p 994.
5. Ibid., No 9, 1983, p 1348.
6. MILITARY ELECTRONICS COUNTERMEASURES, Vol 9, No 1, January 1983, p 106.
7. Ibid.

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EXPERIENCE OF TRAINING, INDOCTRINATION OF MILITARY SCHOOL OFFICER CANDIDATES

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[Article, published under the heading "Military History Work in the Troops and VUZes," by Maj Gen N.A. Gayduk, Lt Col A.A. German and Maj P.D. Alekseyev: "From the Experience of the Instruction and Indoctrination of Military School Officer Candidates"]

[Text] The article "Military History Work on a Level of Modern Requirements" clearly expresses the idea that military history work in the Army and Navy can be improved only by raising the level of military history training for the students of the military academies and the officer candidates of the military schools.(1) This is undoubtedly the case as the graduates of the military institutions of learning will carry their knowledge of military history into the troops. The quality of the military history training of the personnel depends precisely upon them. In this context we would like to share our experience in conducting military history work in our school.

The Ordzhonikidzevsk Twice Red Banner Higher Combined-Arms Command School imeni MSU A.I. Yeremenko has a glorious history. Founded in November 1918, over the period of its existence it has trained thousands of highly skilled officers. Some 27 of its graduates during the years of the Great Patriotic War became Heroes of the Soviet Union while Maj Gens Ivan Ivanovich Fesin and Pavel Ivanovich Shurakhin were awarded this high title twice. The rich combat traditions of the school and the heroism of its graduates on the battlefields of the Civil War and Great Patriotic War make it possible to conduct effective indoctrinational work among the officer candidates. This is carried out under the leadership of the command and the political section.

On the school's territory a portrait gallery has been organized of the Heroes of the Soviet Union who completed the school at different times and panels have been set up which show the combat feats of the Komsomol and the remarkable events in the school's history. In the school buildings and rooms there are stands devoted to the major operations of the Great Patriotic War, portraits of prominent Russian and Soviet military leaders and chiefs, boards with a description of the Russian and Soviet military orders and medals and displays devoted to the heroic past of our motherland. The officer candidates of the first company have set up a corner of Hero of the Soviet Union G.A. Demchenko

who has been entered in perpetuity on the rolls of this subunit. The school museum carries out the basic work of propagandizing combat traditions and it is directed by the devotee and great expert of military history, Lt Col (Ret) L.V. Ilteyev. In his work he endeavors to make certain that each officer candidate knows the history of his school, all its heroes and combat decorations, that he is proud of the school and defends its honor everywhere. The acquainting of the officer candidates and the officers and warrant officers ["praporshchik"] who have arrived for further service with the school's history always starts by visiting the museum.

The museum has become a true center of military indoctrination and propagandizing the combat feats of the school graduates. Here exercises are held on military history, the history of the CPSU and party political work as well as meetings with participants of the Great Patriotic War. The talks held here with Hero of the Soviet Union G.A. Kaloyev, twice Hero of the Soviet Union I.I. Fesin and others were unforgettable.

Military history work in propagandizing the combat traditions of the Soviet Armed Forces, the Red Banner Northern Caucasus Military District, the school and the heroic feats of its graduates holds a special place in the process of indoctrinating the officer candidates. The forms of this work vary and include training exercises, lectures, reports, the showing of films, meetings with war and labor veterans, with officers who carried out their international duty in Afghanistan, lessons of courage, special-subject evenings and military history exhibits. The work is done on an integrated basis with the active involvement of all categories of the command and political personnel and instructors.

The military rituals have a great impact on the awareness and feelings of the officer candidates and these include: taking the military oath, the trooping of the color, the mounting of guards, the meeting of the new students of the school, the graduating of officers and so forth. Another effective means of military indoctrination is the military memoir, historical and artistic literature. The officer candidates are interested in discussing the books they have read. Particularly popular are such works as "Vospominaniya i razmyshleniya" [Recollections and Reflections] of G.K. Zhukov, "Delo vsey zhizni" [A Cause of One's Entire Life] by A.M. Vasilevskiy, "Generalnyy shtab v gody voyny" [The General Staff in the War Years] by S.M. Shtemenko, "50 let v stroyu" [Fifty Years in Service] by A.A. Ignatyev, "Soldatyami ne rozhdayutsya" [Soldiers Are Not Born] by K.M. Simonov, "Blokada" [Blockade] by A.B. Chakovskiy, "Voyna" [War] by I.F. Stadnyuk, "Volokolamskoye shosse" [Volokolamsk Highway] by A.A. Bek and many others.

An inseparable part of military history work in the school is the planned exercises including lectures, seminars on the course of military history as well as home assignment quizzes, consultations and independent study.

In the teaching of military history, particular attention is paid to the scientificness of treating the subject, the class approach in assessing historical facts, to shaping and developing the operational-tactical and tactical viewpoint of the officer candidates as well as to their indoctrination in the heroic traditions of the past. In the course of the

exercises the leading role of the Communist Party and V.I. Lenin is disclosed in the organizational development of the Armed Forces, in the development of military art and in achieving victory over the enemies of the Soviet state.

The lectures on military history examine various questions such as covert preparations of battle and an operation, the achieving of surprise troop actions, the breaching of a deliberate defense and the development of a tactical success into an operational one, the conducting of an encirclement battle, maneuvering of troops for coming out in the enemy rear, attacks against flanks, the crossing of water obstacles and so forth. At the same time for a more profound understanding of the essence and ways for resolving the problems of tactics and operational art during the war years, great importance is paid to an effective study of the operations from the initial period of the Great Patriotic War, the Battles of Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk, the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy, Belorussian, Iasi-Kishinev, Vistula-Oder, Berlin and Manchurian Operations. The essence of each designated problem as well as the ways and means for solving it are examined using concrete examples. Here they consider the experience of the battles and operations of the Great Patriotic War and its importance under present-day conditions is shown.

The seminar exercises examine the most important problems of military art with a larger portion of the time being given over to discussing questions of the development of the tactics of subunits and units as well as the combat employment of the branches of troops during the years of the Great Patriotic War.

Military history work in the school is not limited to lectures and seminar exercises. Independent study and consultations are an inseparable continuation of it. Independent work consists not only in studying the training material but also reading additional military history, documentary and artistic literature as well as having each officer candidate carry out an individual test assignment. Moreover, a portion of the officer candidates writes and defends course projects on military history.

The subjects of the homework exams and course work are determined by the chair. In analyzing a majority of them it is essential to review the questions of the activities of the commanders and staffs, the units and subunits in organizing combat operations, the command of the subunits in the course of battle as well as analyze examples of their manifesting of initiative, the ability to correctly assess the situation and soundly choose the ways and means for carrying out the set tasks. Moreover, before vacation a portion of the officer candidates is given an assignment to collect military history material on their home city or area. On the eve of tours of duty in the troops, all officer candidates are given an assignment to study the campaign record of the unit and formation in which they will do their tour as well as hold talks with the soldiers on military history subjects. While in the troops, the officer candidates visit the troop rooms of combat glory and memorial complexes. The employment of the collected material in exercises is commended by the instructors.

Consultations on military history hold an important place in the military history work. These make it possible to focus the officer candidates on studying a problem and help them understand difficult material as well as find interesting literature.

An important role has also been given to the military-scientific circle where the officer candidates gain skills in conducting independent scientific research. Admitted to the circle are officer candidates who have successfully mastered the curriculum and show a desire to participate in military scientific work. The circle is led by the military history instructor.

The main forms of work for the circle are: working out abstracts, papers and reports; the giving of lectures and talks; participation in a discussion of theoretical journal articles; the working out of teaching materials and the preparing of visual aids; participation in reader conferences and competitions; the conducting of military history contests.

Military history questions are also touched upon in the teaching of other disciplines. For example, on the chair of tactics, in accord with the subject of the exercise, the lectures and educational materials include examples from the experience of combat operations and the organizing of party political work during the years of the Great Patriotic War and the actions of the units of the limited Soviet troop contingent in Afghanistan as well as postwar exercises. Documentary news films are shown systematically on past battles and engagements, excerpts from the memoirs of prominent military leaders are read and tape recordings are employed in the teaching process.

We should also note the methods of the tactics instructor, Lt Col V.P. Stelmakh who teaches the officer candidates to have a creative approach to the question of employing the combat experience of the last war, in using it to consider the new conditions, means, forms and methods of combat operations and thus widen one's theoretical viewpoint and improve tactical skills. He indoctrinates in the officer candidates a firm confidence in the high combat qualities of the weapons and combat equipment assigned to them, he teaches them to show initiative in combat and develops their tactical thinking.

Unfortunately, individual instructors have a poor knowledge of military history and as a result of this the effectiveness of the exercises conducted by them is reduced.

Other effective forms of military history work in the school include writing the history of the school, preparing military scientific papers on historical subjects, articles, military history references as well as the creating of teaching aids. Recently the school has published the teaching aid "Razvitiye taktiki oboronitelnogo boya strelkovykh podrazdeleniy v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny (1941-1945 gg.)" [The Development of the Tactics of Defensive Battle of Rifle Subunits During the Years of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945)].

VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL also provides inestimable aid in studies and this is received by each platoon of the senior grades. The junior grades subscribe to two or three issues per company.

Thus, military history work at the school includes a broad range of measures and is a powerful level in the activities of the school command, the commanders, the political workers and instructors in improving the quality of instruction and indoctrination of the personnel.

Regardless of the fact that there is much that is positive in conducting military history work in the school, there are also problems. Thus, the school library has only a small number of memoir, military history and artistic works which are in great demand among the officer candidates and officers and special-subject film strips on military history are lacking. There are also other difficulties. We are aware of them and are endeavoring to overcome them as quickly as possible.

The military history work carried out at the school helps to indoctrinate the personnel in a spirit of loyalty to the motherland, to the party and to the people as well as to the oath, and it mobilizes the officer candidates to achieve high results in studies and in discipline. It can be said with confidence that the school is right to be proud of its graduates of recent years indoctrinated in the combat traditions of the older generations. These include Heroes of the Soviet Union V.G. Andreyev, R.S. Aushev and G.A. Demchenko, the winner of the Order of Lenin S. Ivanov, the winners of the Order of the Red Star A. Buzarov, S. Petrov, V. Lazaridi, A. Abiduyev, A. Apanasov, S. Gladetskiy, V. Dikarev, V. Kornev, A. Kurkin, and many others. Some of them have perished in carrying out their duty to the motherland completely.

FOOTNOTE

1. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 1, 1987, p 11.

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COVERING STATE FRONTIER ON EVE OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

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[Article by Maj I.I. Yakovlenko: "On Covering the State Frontier on the Eve of the Great Patriotic War"; the article was written from the experience of the Kiev Special Military District]

[Text]

The covering of the state frontier presupposes a total of measures carried out by the command of the border military districts and border troop districts in the aim of repelling or weakening an enemy attack from the land, sea or air and ensure good conditions for the deployment of the troops and their fighting.(1) This concept also includes measures to interdict the penetration of agents, sabotage-intelligence and other special enemy forces across the frontier.

On the eve of the Great Patriotic War, Soviet military art on the questions of organizing the defense of the state frontier proceeded from the erroneous "assumption that an enemy surprise attack was excluded and that a decisive offensive by the enemy would be preceded either by a declaration of war or by the actual start of military operations with limited forces, after which the Soviet troops would be able to move up to their defensive positions and occupy them."(2) At the same time, the second year of the ongoing World War II had already shown the aggressor's tendency even in peacetime to establish strong assault groupings consisting of air, tank, mechanized and motorized troops capable of preventing the deployment of the main forces of the border military districts by a surprise invasion without a declaration of war. Proceeding from these objective conditions at that time it was essential to have a constantly ready strong grouping of troops covering the state frontier. However, Soviet military theory did not take into account the experience of military operations in the West and it had not succeeded in working out a consistent concept for the initial period of a war. The existing theory assumed, for example, the possibility of carrying out mobilization deployment after the start of the war and was not sufficiently concerned with studying such questions as the conduct of a strategic defensive and pulling troops from under the first attack.(3)

In a version of the plan for defending the USSR state frontier and which was worked out before the end of 1940, for "the defense of the western frontiers there are plans to use around two-thirds of the ground troop divisions and three-quarters of the aviation."(4) Adjusted tasks "for covering the state frontier were issued to the district commanders only at the beginning of 1941. For each border district they set the effective strength of the troops, the most important cover sectors as well as the number and boundaries of the cover areas."(5)

The Kiev Special Military District was to defend the state frontier from the Pripyat River to the settlement of Lipkany (860 km). For carrying out this task they were to employ the troops of the 5th, 6th, 12th and 26th Armies, the fortified areas as well as the subunits and units of Border Troops. For direct support of their combat operations, air formations had been assigned. The Directive of the District Military Council of 7 February 1941 established four cover areas (RP), No 1 for the 5th Army, No 2 for the 6th Army, No 3 for the 26th Army and No 4 for the 12th Army. In the cover area of the 5th Army (from Vlodavy to Krystynopol) which was 170 km wide, "at a distance from 10 to 150 km from the frontier there were positioned five rifle divisions, the XXII Mechanized Corps, eight separate machine gun battalions comprising the garrisons of the fortified areas, one artillery regiment of the High Command Reserve and three antiaircraft artillery battalions. Two air divisions were located at airfields. The 90th and 98th Border Detachments served directly on the frontier."(6)

The 6th Army covered a section of the frontier from Krystynopol to Radymno which was 140 km long (the Lvov sector). This included "three rifle divisions and one cavalry division, the IV Mechanized Corps, five machine gun battalions comprising garrisons of the 4th and 6th Fortified Areas as well as two artillery regiments. In addition under the army were two air divisions and an antiaircraft artillery regiment.... In the army's area border service was stood by the commandant offices of the 91st and partially the 92d Border Detachments."(7)

In the cover area of the 26th Army on the Peremyshl sector, on the 130-km sector from Radymno to Tvorilne, there were "three rifle divisions, one air division, the garrison of the Peremyshl Fortified Area, the VIII Mechanized Corps, one artillery regiment, and two antiaircraft artillery battalions. The security for the state frontier was provided by a portion of the forces of the 92d Border Detachment and all the commandant offices of the 93d."(8)

On the southern flank of the district, from the town of Chernovitsy (now Chernovtsy) to the mouth of the Dniester, the troops of the 12th Army were extended for almost 500 km. Here there were "six rifle divisions, two air divisions, the XVI Mechanized Corps and five antiaircraft artillery battalions.... The frontier was guarded by the commandant offices of the 94th, 95th, 96th and 97th Border Detachments."(9)

The armies occupying the cover areas were given the following tasks: "To cover the mobilizing, concentration and deployment of the front's troops; relying strongly on the defensive works of the fortified areas to prevent the enemy from entering Soviet territory while groupings which had broken through

were to be destroyed by counterstrikes of the mechanized corps; enemy aviation was to be prevented from breaking through into Soviet territory; objectives and facilities of military and state importance were to be guarded...."(10) With the moving up of the cover troops to the state frontier, all the border units of the NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs] located in the cover areas were to be put under operational subordination of the appropriate chiefs of the cover sectors, that is, the divisional commanders.

In the cover areas there were plans to build defensive positions and lines, set up antitank and antipersonnel obstacles, build roads and bridges for moving troops up to their lines and positions as well as for supporting maneuvering. Construction and equipping of fortified areas were carried out widely. On 26 April 1941, the district military council, in accord with the orders of the Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Army of 18 March 1941, put subordinate the following: the 2d and 9th Fortified Areas to the 5th Army, the 4th and 6th to the 6th Army, the 8th to the 26th Army and the 10th and 11th to the 12th Army.(11) Logistic support for the cover troops was planned from the district and organic dumps.

The elaboration of the army cover plans for the state frontier was to be completed by 15 March 1941. Fully involved in carrying out this work were the army commander, the military council member, the chief of staff, the chief of the operations section and the army deputy chief of staff. The commanders and chiefs of staff of the air divisions (in terms of the combat employment of their units) as well as the chiefs of the branches of troops and services prepared individual information and calculations in their special area. The plan included: a map of the decision and an explanatory note; a table for the effective strength of the forces involved in the covering as well as a schedule for the moving up of the units and formations to the state frontier; instructions on organizing air defense with a diagram of the firing positions of the air defense forces; instructions on engineer support for the cover with all calculations; instructions on organizing communications with a communications diagram; a cooperation table with the aviation; a calculation of logistic support; a log for assigning mobile detachments to support the border troops with instructions as to who was to support whom; a list of objectives and structures to be taken under guard by the field troops and NKVD troops.(12) The plan was worked out in two copies: one was kept at the staff of the cover area (army staff) and the second by the chief of the operations directorate of the district staff.

The plans for covering the state frontier within the district zone of responsibility made provision for the use of the following: 10 detachments and 4 regiments of Border Troops; 11 fortified areas; field fortifications; 4 combined-arms armies in the first operational echelon (these included 17 rifle divisions and 1 cavalry division, 4 mechanized corps, 4 artillery regiments, an antiaircraft artillery regiment and 10 separate antiaircraft artillery battalions). The combined-arms armies were covered from the air by 7 composite air divisions.

Of interest is the explanatory note to the plan of the cover area No 4 (12th Army) which, in particular, states: "For covering the mobilization and concentration of troops on the territory of the Kiev Special Military District

[KOVO], from the troops of the 12th Army a cover area No 4 (RP No 4) is to be organized in the sector of Tvorilne, Lipkany.

"The boundary on the right is Proskurov, Trembovlya, Stryy, Drogobych, Proskurov, Sambor Station, Tvorilne. The boundary on the left--Yampol, Mogilev-Podolskiy, Lipkany. The rear boundary is Proskurov, Zhmerinka, Yampol.

"Staff of RP No 4 is in Stanislav.

"Tasks of RP No 4: to cover the concentration and deployment of the troops of the KOVO; in relying strongly on the defensive works of the fortified areas to prevent the enemy from entering Soviet territory and that which does is to be destroyed; to firmly support the sectors: Uzhon, Sambor; Munkach, Skole, Stryy; Khust, Dolina; Akana Rakho, Vorokhta, Delyatin; ...to prevent enemy aviation from breaking through into Soviet territory; to guard facilities and structures of military and state importance.

"Strength of the cover units: headquarters of the 12th Army...; headquarters of the XIII and XVII Rifle Corps with corps units; the 96th and 192d Mountain Rifle Divisions, the 44th, 58th, 60th and 164th Rifle Divisions; the Kamenets-Podolskiy and Mogilev-Podolskiy Fortified Areas; the 289th, 292d, 295th, 227th, 146th, 334th and 84th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalions, the 5th Separate Antiaircraft Battery and the 46th VNOS [aircraft warning] Battalion; the 5th Commandant Office of the 93d Border Detachment, the 94th, 95th and 97th Border Detachments, the 1st and 2d Commandant Offices of the 23d Border Detachment; the 16th Air Division with the 149th Fighter Regiment, the 86th Composite Bomber Regiment and the 12th Fighter Regiment of the 15th Air Division; the 13th and 14th Wireless Signals Stations.

"To the right of the RP No 3. The staff in Sambor. To the left the 179th Rifle Division of the Odessa Military District. RP staff in Kishinev.

"The density of the weapons cover (by types of weapons)...according to the data per kilometer of front they planned: 0.9 of a platoon (border post), 3.9 light machine guns, 1.5 medium machine guns, 2.5 mortars and artillery (over 76-mm), 0.1 large-caliber machine gun and 37-mm antiaircraft gun.

"The entire cover region (RP) has been divided into three sectors: No 1 with the XIII Rifle Corps consisting of headquarters and corps units, the 192d Mountain Rifle Division, the 44th Rifle Division, the 5th Commandant Office of the 93d Border Detachment, the 94th Border Detachment and the 1st Commandant Office of the 95th Border Detachment...."(13)

The explanatory note indicated the missions of the attached air forces, their strength, peacetime base airfields and relocation airfields, and scheduled the actions for the first 10 days. Then by analogy they listed the tasks for air defense, engineer support, the organization of signals, the organization of the rear services and logistic support, for the cover and security of installations and structures of state significance.(14)

An analysis of the cover plan for the state frontier for the 12th and other cover armies of the KOVO shows that the provided forces were completely sufficient to carry out the set tasks. However, the delayed elaboration of the cover plan, "its tardy introduction as well as the slowness of the Soviet military command in the concentration and deployment of the Red Army under the conditions of a direct threat of war led to a situation where the Soviet troop grouping by the moment of the attack by the Nazi Army did not conform to the requirements of the situation."(15) Actually by the end of 21 June 1941, the cover troops had not been brought to complete combat readiness and had not been moved up to their deployment areas. They were in their permanent positions or in camps. The aviation had not been dispersed to operational airfields. The construction of the fortified areas near the new state front had not been completed while an absolute majority of the fortified areas along the old state boundary had already been broken up and their weapons disassembled. "A significant portion of the alerted cover troops came under attack by enemy ground and air forces and was unable to occupy the planned defensive lines. The forward formations from the cover armies were forced often without a pause and piecemeal to enter meeting engagements or conduct defensive battles on unprepared lines."(16) The cover troops, for example, of the KOVO began to move up to the state frontier at 0400-0600 hours on the morning of 22 June 1941, that is, when the war had already started. All of this made it possible for the aggressor to achieve an initial success and force the main forces of the district to deploy under the attack of the enemy advancing groupings and go over to the strategic defensive.

Since the Great Patriotic War the further development of weaponry has continued and the problem of covering the state frontier has developed into the problem of an operational cover for the deployment of the troops, in gaining great importance. The experience of organizing the cover of the frontier of the KOVO prior to the Great Patriotic War indicates that the basic factors necessitating an operational cover and determining the methods of organizing it and troop actions are: the views of the probable enemy on the nature of a future war and the methods of initiating it; the presence of battle-ready aggressor invasion groupings and their state; the physico-geographic conditions of the theater of operations.

An analysis of the modern views of the probable enemy concerning the nature of a future war and the methods of initiating it indicates that the political and military leadership of the United States and NATO considers it essential to hold the nuclear missile, airborne and ground groupings in a state of constant high alert for the immediate initiating of the war and for carrying out the tasks of its initial period without their additional deployment. In accord with these views, they have established the necessary groupings of strategic nuclear attack weapons, ground troops, aviation and navy, as well as enormous supplies of materiel in the theaters of operations. These groupings of the imperialist blocs and particularly the American strategic nuclear attack weapons are in a state of high combat readiness ensuring the surprise unleashing of a world nuclear war. In considering that a modern war can be initiated under various conditions of a military-political situation and will be waged by diverse means, the imperialists for this purpose are holding on alert duty strategic missiles, nuclear missile submarines, strategic aviation

and spacecraft as well as groupings of ground troops. In organizing an operational cover, we must take into account the given factors.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War and the views of the probable enemy concerning the initiating of a war indicate that in the border military districts and troop groups it is essential to have strong cover troop groupings capable of supporting the deployment of the main district forces and troop groups. The aim of the operational cover is to repel an enemy surprise attack under any conditions of initiating a war, to support the switch of the district troops from a peacetime to a wartime status, their operational deployment for conducting hostilities and organizing the commitment to battle. In planning and organizing the operational and combat training of the troops, special attention must be paid to the ongoing fundamental technical rearming of the probable enemy, to its mass introduction of nuclear and high-precision weapons, other types of weapons and the means of delivering them to any point of the world, as well as the possibility that aggression may be started by surprise attacks of these weapons and by an invasion of prepared groupings from the air, from land and from the sea.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Voyennyy entsiklopedicheskiy slovar" [Military Encyclopedic Dictionary], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, p 590.
2. "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945" [History of Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 1, 1963, p 474.
3. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 3, 1974, p 411.
4. Ibid., p 435.
5. Ibid., p 437.
6. I.Kh. Bagramyan, "Tak nachinalas voyna" [Thus Began the War], Moscow, Voenizdat, Revised 2d Edition, 1977, p 56.
7. Ibid., pp 56-57.
8. Ibid., p 57.
9. Ibid., p 58.
10. TsAMO [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 131, inv. 9776, file 6, sheets 1-15.
11. Ibid., folio 10 UR, inv. 825024, file 1, sheet 67.
12. Ibid., folio 131, inv. 9776, file 6, sheet 11.

13. Below are given the tasks and reinforcements. In a similar manner the sectors No 2 and No 3 are listed as well as the reserve of the cover area (96th Mountain Rifle Division).

14. TsAMO, folio 131, inv. 9777, file 1, sheets 1-19.

15. "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy...", Vol 2, 1963, p 49.

16. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Vol 4, p 36.

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